

THE
SAINT PAULS MAGAZINE.

JULY, 1873.

MR. CARINGTON.

CHAPTER XXI.

A QUEER SUPPER PARTY.

"Conspirators may sup as well as Emperors,
And with about an equal appetite."

DRURY LANE had not seen so great a sensation since it last was burnt down, as the appearance of two gentlemen in the box of the mysterious lady known as Lily Page. A dramatic critic who happened to have a stall, rushed out, chartered a hansom, and sought his editor in Fleet Street. That illustrious journalist, though just giving directions as to a leader to be written on the imminent probability of a European war, thought this matter so much more weighty, that he drove off to the theatre at once. There was the heroine of the hour, attended by two cavaliers: and Mr. Thornleigh, accustomed to interviews with ministerial people, recognized Conyers at once. But who was the other? Mr. Thornleigh was sure he had seen him somewhere. Mr. Carington's, as we know, was not public but social distinction; he was not a man to be seen at the House, or at race-courses, or even at fashionable parties on a vast scale; those who got him to their smallest and choicest gatherings, deemed themselves fortunate.

The editor went into the saloon to see if any lounge could yield him information, and was lucky enough to meet an old acquaintance, an attaché detached, a novelist, spiritualist, journalist, and a dozen other things of ist-ending, a man as brilliant as a meteor, and as mad as a March hare. Him accosting, the secret was out at once,

"That's Carington," says Roderick Deseret.

"The Carington?"

"The same. I suppose the girl's his mistress. He has only just come back to London, I hear, which would account for her going about alone. Isn't she handsome?"

"A stunner. Pity we can't find out more about her. A virtuous yet suggestive leader would be just the thing for to-morrow. There's nothing in the telegrams except war rumours, and our readers much prefer a scandal."

Ah, Mr. Thornleigh! What if you could have followed the mysterious party to the Red House?

As Mr. Carington escorted Paulovna down the staircase of the theatre to her carriage, they attracted everybody's gaze. It was not only that Lily Page, the Incognita of the moment, had found a cavalier, but that he himself, looking young, through the power of spirit and style, and health of body and mind, was clearly a man of distinction. As they plodded downwards he was talking to her very seriously, still in Romanic: and when he placed her in the brougham, he said,—

"My friend and I will be with you in an hour. That will give Demetrius time to prepare. The Prince must join us, you know: and according to the temper in which I find him, will be the advice I give you. Adieu for an hour."

Paulovna drove away. Mr. Carington took Conyers's arm, and strolled with him into Bow Street, having ordered his brougham to wait for them. The night, though cold, was starlit and pleasant.

"Well, Conyers," he asked, when they got beyond the bustle of carriages and cabs, "what do you think of Lily Page?"

"Very charming, and very odd. How came you to be so intimate with her? Is she—well—what people say she is?"

"Not a bit of it," said Mr. Carington. "It is my belief, Conyers, that if I, in the immediate neighbourhood of that lighted police office, were to tell you all I know about Lily Page, and how I know it, you would give me into custody, and telegraph the F. S. to come to London at once, lest it should be blown to imperceptible atoms."

"Ah," said Conyers, "then don't, please. I should like a quiet supper. Besides, you promised me an introduction to some conspirators."

"We'll have a quiet supper with some conspirators; the real thing. Did you notice that black-bearded fellow at the box door? He's a Free Brother."

"The deuce! He looked like Agamemnon when he had made up his mind to kill Iphigenia."

"He's not a bad fellow, in some respects, but his ambition is to assassinate an Emperor. I don't think he much cares *which*."

"Pleasant man to know," said Conyers. "What's his connexion with this amazing Lily Page?"

"She's a Silent Sister."

"By Jove, she talked enough to you to-night."

"Well, she shall talk to you presently. We are going to sup

with her. Meanwhile, let us lounge into the Albion for a cigar. Perhaps we may see Prince Oistravieff."

They did not, as may be supposed, but they were marked down by Thornleigh and Deseret, who had come in to console each other for the impossibility of getting a leader out of the Lily. Thornleigh, a man of promptitude, thought he saw his opportunity, and came up to Conyers, whom he had often bored at Downing Street. Your Under-Secretary cannot afford to snub the editor of a daily paper, so the two got into a conversation apart. Mr. Carington, who was cooling himself with a pint of claret, guessed what was up, and was quietly amused by his friend's misadventure. But Conyers could take care of himself. Thornleigh's whispered remark, when he came back to his friend Roderick the Roamer, was—

"No go."

"Who's your friend?" asked Mr. Carington, as they entered the brougham to drive to the Red House.

"O, don't ask. He's an editor. He wanted to know something about Lily Page in the interest of morality, and to be introduced to you in the interest of society. If there had been time I'd have invented for him a history of the Lily that would rather have astonished his readers to-morrow."

"He ought to be with us to-night," said Mr. Carington. "I am going to sup in a house of conspirators. You will meet Oistravieff, who has been their victim."

He briefly told Conyers the story.

"I met the Prince, and some of these people, in Russia, a good many years ago. I accidentally saved the life of one of them, at a wolf hunt. That was Demetrius, to whom poor Paulovna was to have been married. She is a marvellously clever woman, you can see; she is a great linguist and quite a brilliant little actress: but I think she has made a great mistake in marrying that rascal of a Prince. Demetrius would have married her at any moment. He is a very quiet fellow, but I doubt him. He will hardly forgive her."

"What do you mean to advise?"

"I shall endeavour to judge this evening. I want to get them all out of the country, so that they may get into no difficulty."

"The best plan. Fools of that sort are a great nuisance in England. They fancy themselves dangerous, when they are only contemptible."

They reached the Red House, and were by Demetrius shown to a well-lighted room, where supper was prepared for four. The Prince and Princess Oistravieff entered: the tall Russian had a sort of sulky civility about him. Coward always, he had been on this occasion frightened to the uttermost: but when he found Mr. Carington and another Englishman in the house, his sanguine

slyness revived, and he began to think the game not quite lost, and thought he would try to outwit his enemies. Once he could get out of their power, he would place himself under the protection of the Russian Ambassador at the Court of St. James's, repudiating a marriage which he considered doubly void, as it was celebrated under compulsion, and as the woman was a mere serf. He had a peculiarly difficult part to play, especially in the presence of a man of Mr. Carington's discernment: but he played it well. Savage as he felt, he never showed his teeth. He behaved to Paulovna in a deferential apologetic way, as if really sorry for a crime which he could not expect her to forgive: he was courteous and subdued, and took a very small share in the conversation. The others were somewhat lively, Conyers being extremely amused at the notion of a conspirators' supper party. Demetrius and Ivan waited at table.

When supper was finished these last left the room. Then Mr. Carington said to Paulovna—

"Princess, this I understand is a supper of business. You wish to decide as to future arrangements between yourself and the Prince?"

"I do," she said.

"I have been told what has occurred, Prince Oistravieff," he went on: "I think there should be a present settlement of affairs. The situation is dangerous. Conspiracies cannot exist in England. What do you propose?"

"I think," said Oistravieff, speaking slowly, "that there should be a second marriage, in public, so that my wife may be recognized. I would willingly persuade her to live with me: if that cannot be I should wish her to live in the position that belongs to the Princess Oistravieff, choosing her own place of residence. That is what I propose."

Paulovna was perplexed by the Prince's mild tone, and liberal way of putting it. Mr. Carington was not at all disposed to think him sincere, but he saw that something must be done.

"Paulovna," he said, "you had better go and consult Ivan and Demetrius on this matter. It is important, tell them, that your association should leave the Red House as soon as possible. The police are sure to find you out. Ask them if you shall accept the Prince's offer: ask yourself if you can live with him or not."

She obeyed.

"Romance in Wandsworth," said Conyers tersely. "This is Wandsworth, I think. The yellow fog we drove through, which made our cigars splutter, smelt of the Wandle; in which stream, I am told, Ned Nelson caught trout."

"You really would like the Princess to live with you?" said Mr. Carington to the Prince. "She is very handsome and very clever, and would do credit to the highest society."

"I do not know what the Emperor will say, but I should wish to make her amends. Do you think they will consent?"

He could not conceal his intense anxiety. As he spoke, entered the Princess, her usually pale face flushed ruddily—she could hardly force herself to speak—the words rose in her fair white throat and seemed to stop there, throbbing to escape. At last she cried,—

"Ivan and Demetrius say that if I am to be Princess Oistravieff I must live with Prince Michael and be his wife—else it will be a shame to me. Shall I do it, Mr. Carington?"

"If you and the Prince," he said, rising, "can live together, it will be well for you both—the best thing possible."

"It shall be so, Paulovna," said the Prince in Russian, taking her hand. At that moment she almost fainted, but Mr. Carington gave her some wine.

Demetrius and Ivan entered.

"What is done is right, I hope," said Ivan. "You wish my sister to live with you, Prince Michael?"

"Yes," he said. "There shall be another wedding at the Embassy. You will be there. Then we will travel together. I am glad to think we are friends at last."

"You had better come back to the Clarendon Hotel with us," said Mr. Carington to the Prince. "But a place should be provided for the Princess early to-morrow; she ought not to remain here."

"I think I know exactly the sort of place," said Conyers. "An old servant of our family has just furnished a house in Brook Street, intending to receive lodgers. She has none yet. I can arrange it quite early in the morning, if you think that would suit the Princess, Carington?"

"Nothing could be better. You must go under your own name, Paulovna. A little diplomacy will be requisite, but you can manage all that, Prince Oistravieff, I am sure."

"I will try," he said.

Mr. Carington gave Ivan and Demetrius a sign to come with him out of the room. They passed into another, a sordid bed-chamber.

"You wish her to live with him, really?" he said to them.

"It is the right thing," said Ivan.

"And you believe he will keep faith?"

"He dare not break it," said Ivan.

"He will if he can," muttered Demetrius.

"Well, let your sister go as early as convenient to this house in Brook Street. Everybody ought to leave this place to-morrow. Ivan, you had better go with your sister, as if you were a courier or attendant. What shall you do, Demetrius?"

"I shall follow Prince Michael."

While this conversation was in progress, Conyers had discreetly strolled into the wide passage to smoke a cigarette, of which he is the

best maker out of Asia. He thought the Prince and Princess would like to be alone. They both wished he had stayed. Oistravieff found it more difficult to be affectionate to Paulovna when they were by themselves, while she, poor girl, was full of doubt as to whether she ought to have obeyed her brother and Demetrius.

It was morning when the party separated. Guess how the Prince felt when the fast trotters from Quartermaine's took him really out of reach of that detested Red House toward the happy purlieus of Bond Street. Guess how Paulovna felt when she threw herself on her bed and wondered what would come of it all. The Prince shuddered at the past he had escaped, the Princess shuddered at the future to which she had bound herself. Neither knew how great a mistake each had made.

Arrived at the Clarendon, the Prince went to bed. Not so Mr. Carington and his friend. It was bright daylight, though so early in the year. Supplies were reaching the hotel. Conyers beheld some lobsters just fresh from the fishmonger's.

"After cigarettes and epigrams," he said, "my greatest achievement is a lobster-salad. Let me make you one, Carington, then we shall have an appetite for bed."

To this dissipation Mr. Carington agreed. All his life he had been ready for a pleasant caprice. As they thus ended the night or began the day, London was just awaking. A half-dressed housemaid came into the room with sweeping apparatus, and recoiled hastily when she saw it occupied.

"What a despatch you'll have for the F.S., Conyers," said Mr. Carington. "You'll be able to tell him who Lily Page is, now."

"Nice wiggling I should get, if the Chief found I'd been supping with Silent Sisters. However, I can tell him Oistravieff's returned, that's a blessing."

"You won't have to sacrifice Gibraltar this time. Indeed, you ought to make the Russian Ambassador apologize for troubling you. Can't they look after their own scamps?"

"I suppose they've got too many," said Conyers. "Do you think this particular scamp will keep his promises?"

"The only safeguard is that he will be afraid to break them. If he plays any trick, his life won't be worth an hour's purchase. It is just a cast of the dice."

"Well," says Conyers, "I must go. That old lady in Brook Street will be just visible, and I can prepare her for the Princess. What do you mean to do?"

"I shall go to bed for an hour or two, then I shall look in upon Paulovna to see how matters stand. And then, if there is nothing to keep me, I shall go back to Delamere."

"O yes, you have been with the Earl. Will he recover? Our people want to know, because of his borough interest."

"He's good for ten years yet, in my opinion."

"I suppose the title will be extinct on his death," said Conyers. "Who'll get the estates, I wonder?"

"It is a very pretty problem," said Mr. Carington; "I am trying to solve it. Good-by, old fellow; if I stay in town I'll look in at the Chandos. Mind your despatch about Lily Page."

Conyers, walking down the steps of the hotel, touched a black-bearded man, who bowed apologetically. It was Demetrius Brakinska, on the watch.

Mr. Carington, looking out of window before he took refuge in bed, saw, on the opposite side of the way, a tall fair-haired brown-skinned broad-shouldered man, walking Bond Street as if it were Oregon.

"What a wonderful likeness!" he said to himself.

CHAPTER XXII.

NUMBER ONE AND NUMBER TWO.

Alouette. But who is he, Papa? Is he a Vision, too?

Astrologos. He is the Central Vision, dwelling far away
Where suns are stifled in the Dark intangible,
Where constellations perish like a soap-bubble.

Alouette. What an unpleasant creature!

Astrologos. He's the Negative
Father of all things positive.

The Comedy of Dreams.

MR. CARINGTON, when he had refreshed himself with a light sleep, was as brisk as ever, notwithstanding the conspirators' supper and its dramatic ending, and, as he walked up Bond Street to call on the Princess, those who noticed his easy elastic tread would never have guessed how full of fatigue his last day or two had been. He had that happy faculty of sound sleep which gives a man in his waking hours complete possession of all other faculties. People who cannot sleep well are never wide awake. Dip me in Lethe four hours of the twenty-four, and let me breathe pure oxygen the other twenty.

As he walked along to Paulovna's new lodgings, so luckily provided by Conyers, Mr. Carington revolved in his mind several questions. Would the Prince keep his compact? or would he tell his Ambassador all that he dared, and cause a regular explosion? Mr. Carington had no wish to be disturbed by explosions, having on his mind the momentous affairs of his little friend Elinor. Again, why had Paulovna played the part of Lily Page so long after the Prince had fallen wholly into the trap laid for him? Again, who was that tall stalwart fellow whom he had seen that morning shouldering his way along Bond Street?

Paulovna had been established for some hours in her elegant quarters: and there stood on a table near her a superb bouquet already sent her by Prince Oistravieff. In the girl's countenance Mr. Carington thought he could trace a mixture of exhaustion and excitement, of defiance and terror. She spoke coolly enough, though with evident suppression of her feelings.

"The Prince is courteous," she said, languidly. "Look at those charming flowers. See," holding out her hand, dazzling white as the snow of her own steppes, "there was a ruby ring in it, wrapt in a line or two of Russian verse. Am not I fortunate?"

"You have played a daring game, Paulovna, and you seem to have won it; and now you seem to be sorry for your triumph. It is too late. The Prince appears tamed; you cannot be happy with him, but you may be gay enough, with ample money and pleasant society."

"I hate it all," she said.

"Why you drove about London as Lily Page, very much as though you enjoyed it, and did not even vanish from the scene when you had caught your victim. How was that?"

"Ah," she sighed, putting her white hands before her wild eyes as if to shut out some dire vision, "I am a slave. I am a worse slave than in my wretched childhood, when I belonged to the fiend who is now my husband. I dare not disobey the orders I have received. I am in dreadful fear now, lest I have done wrong by allowing the Prince to leave the Red House: but you frightened us all, Mr. Carington, and if something dreadful happens to me it will be your fault."

"Pooh, Paulovna! what should happen? These things have upset you. Take a glass of wine and go to bed early. You will soon be all right again."

"Never," she said. "O, I am tired of this horrid slavery. Yes, I will risk it, I can speak here, and to you. You know I am No. Six?"

"Yes," he said, "and more than that."

"What more? Tell me."

"O, nothing to excite you. I met No. Two of the S. S. in Paris a few months ago, and she told me you were doing important work in London. That is all."

"But how do you know so much about us, when you are not one of us? It is strange beyond belief, Mr Carington."

"How do you know I am not one of you? Perhaps I am No. One, after all."

He laughed therewith. She shuddered, and said—

"O no, no, no, Mr Carington, you are not that dreadful mystery, I am sure."

"Well, perhaps not. Who is he, Paulovna . . . or she, which is it? of course you know."

"Ah, indeed I do not. There are but two in the world who know. But it was his distinct order which caused me to appear in London as Lily Page, to go driving about, to entrap Prince Oistravieff. I was told to go on afterwards, partly to prevent suspicion, and partly to attract some one else."

"Whom?"

"He was shown me, but no name was told me, and I had not seen him before. He is a tall wide light-haired Englishman, with very blue eyes and very white teeth. I was to have an introduction to him, and to bring him to the Red House. Now what will happen I dread to think; for you have made me disobey, and let the Prince out, and break up the place down there, and I don't know what may be done to me."

"Keep up your courage, child; you are frightened for the moment. Haven't you Ivan and Demetrius to take care of you?"

"What can *they* do, poor slaves? What can anybody do against No. One? No: I must suffer what I must suffer. If I knew beforehand I could bear it: but it is the dread of something unknown that horrifies me. Why, Mr. Carington, one of us, who had disobeyed, was taken out of her bed in a Paris Hotel at dead of night, and drowned in the Seine. I knew it was to be done, yet dared not warn her, though we were at supper together the night before, with some of those who did it. 'You look tired to-night, Paulovna,' she said, as we parted. I did not undress. I went early next morning to the Morgue . . . and there was her body."

At that instant Prince Oistravieff was announced. He had arrived in a superb equipage. Paulovna received him with dignity: Mr. Carington talked for a few minutes, and then took leave.

"I shall see you again, I hope," said Paulovna.

"I doubt it, Madame," he replied. "It is important that I should be in the country in a few hours."

She gave him an imploring look. He smiled meaningly and, as he passed Ivan in the hall, said—

"I go out of town early to-morrow, but your sister wants to see me again. Find out from her when she will be quite alone, and let me know at the Clarendon."

Mr. Carington having nothing to do at this moment, walked briskly on to the Park. He was one of those men who can always think fast if they walk or ride fast. He was puzzled by Paulovna's revelations: for, though accident had given him close acquaintance with some of the secret societies, he had no idea of such desperate deeds as these. A Reign of Terror and of Mystery together is slightly appalling.

"I will go round and look for Conyers at the Chandos presently," thought Carington to himself. "He'll dine with me, I dare say, as nobody's in town, and I can wait at the Hotel for Ivan. How much or how little shall I tell Conyers? These F. O. men are so fussy."

"Who is No. One? That's the great question of the day. I guess, but I can't get proof. If I am right, what a smash he'll come to, one of these days! Such a network of rascality can't last."

He stood still at Grosvenor Gate, lighting a cigar. As he looked up, having successfully accomplished this operation, an open carriage and pair swept through from the Park and turned down the Lane—in it sat a lady, young, ravishingly pretty in a Lilliput style, buried in white fur, with a white Maltese dog as sole companion.

"No. Two, by Jove!" thought Carington. "The plot thickens."

He had thrown away his cigar in his surprise. He saw a small Street-Arab close to him:

"Boy!" he said, giving him a half-crown, "run fast after that carriage, get up behind if you can, stick to it until it stops, and then come back and tell me where the lady gets out. Quick, or you'll lose sight of it. I'll stay here."

The youngster rushed off as none but a London street boy can. Mr. Carington's message had given the barouche a start, but this head-long imp, diving under carts, astonishing horses by sudden appearance from beneath, threading the needle adroitly through groups of ladies and gentlemen, kept it well in sight, and was up behind before the corner had long been turned. The carriage stopped at Grange's, and the lady entered: and the boy looking with admiration through the window at fruit which would have seemed as miraculous to him in July as it really was in February, saw that the lady in white fur was talking to a gentleman in fur equally black. They were not long together: he handed her to her carriage, and her affectionate little attendant jumped adroitly up behind. The horses went on rapidly to Thomas's Hotel, Berkeley Square, and the lady went in, and the carriage was dismissed.

"I hope that bloke's got another bit of silver about him," said the youngster to himself, scampering off towards Grosvenor Gate.

There was Mr. Carington, slightly chilled, but calmly smoking. The street-boy told him his adventure with a graphic brevity quite unknown to the penny-a-liner. He did not forget the white lady's talking to an ugly tall dark man in the beautiful fruit shop.

"Do you know what to do with money?" asked Mr. Carington. "That half-crown, now?"

"Give it to mother," said the boy. "She does charing and I runs errands: and when I've had a good day, O, don't we have a stunning supper of 'ot sassengers!"

"Do you call this a good day?" asked Mr. Carington, much amused.

"Don't I! And it's so jolly cold, I shall just buy some Cream of the Wilderness for mother."

Mr. Carington tossed the boy a sovereign, which he caught as cleverly as a jackdaw catches biscuit.

"Lord, sir," he cried, when he saw gold, "you don't mean it, I know."

"Of course I do. Mind you get your mother a good supper."

As Mr. Carington drove away in a hansom which happened to come up, he saw his street-boy turning in his delight the maddest somersaults.

What had just occurred gave our friend more to do than he expected: but he was most anxious to get out of town and look after Elinor. Driving first to the Clarendon, he noted Demetrius standing a grim sentinel not far off. He signalled him, having dismissed the cab.

"The Prince?" he said in Russian.

"At home."

"Where has he been?"

"To Paulovna. Then to a shop in Piccadilly."

Mr. Carington interrogatively placed two fingers on his lower lip. Demetrius nodded. Mr. Carington walked on to the Chandos Club. Conyers was there.

"Conyers," he said, "is there a messenger here that can be trusted to find a thing out quietly? A fellow who could go to an hotel and ascertain the movements of anyone there."

"I know nobody here, but my groom does that sort of thing beautifully, and he's just round the corner at the mews. I have only ridden down, for the chance of meeting you and making you dine with me."

"That's impossible," said Mr. Carington: "sorry as I am, you must dine with me again to-day, for I have much to tell you. As to the groom, can he get hold of some of the servants at Thomas's, and find out whether the Marchesa Ravioli is at home to-night, and bring word quietly to my room at the Clarendon?"

"He'll do that to perfection," said Conyers, and promptly gave orders at once. "What a mysterious state you are in, old fellow. What is happening? Who's the Marchesa Ravioli?"

"Isn't she known at the F. O.? Faith, you don't know everything. However I dare say you can enlighten me on one or two points as we dine. It will be a scratch dinner again, I regret to say."

As they were about to enter the hotel, Mr. Carington was accosted by a tall man, who said,

"Midnight, sir."

"Right," was the reply.

"Carington," said Conyers, who had caught the words, "are you a Jesuit, or are you a conspirator? Confess."

"I confess I am hungry. Now, John, the best dinner you have at a moment's notice. Next time I come to see you we'll dine every day like Princes."

"I don't so much care about Princes," says John, in a low tone.

"I suppose, Conyers," said Mr. Carington, when they were alone after dinner, and the diplomatist was skilfully rolling cigarettes, and the Mocha was fragrant, "there is not much official information about these Elder Brothers and Silent Sisters."

"What we have is false, as I said before. Last night's adventure would rather amaze the F. S. What's the Prince going to do?"

"He sent the lady a bouquet to-day: and called while I was there, so I suppose it is all right. But from a lot of little circumstances which I cannot yet piece together, I fancy these fools are combining their private plot against Oistravieff with some political plot, working upon Paris, probably. I forget whether I told you that the Brethren and Sisters are known by numbers: No. One being a mysterious entity at the head of both. I should like to find out who he or she is. I feel certain I know, but proof is the point."

Conyers took a pencil and an old envelope, which he tore in two. He wrote a name on one half, and then passed the pencil and the other half to Mr. Carington. The names written were the same.

"We are right, I believe," said Mr. Carington. "Of the Free Brethren I only know two or three, in connexion with the Russian adventure I mention. Of the Silent Sisters I know more, for I had learnt their language of gesture, and have amused myself by detecting them in many saloons of the Continent, and frightening them awfully. Quite by accident I saw No. Two of the S. S. in the Park to-day: she is the lady for whom your groom is inquiring."

"I wish we could grip these stupid societies by the neck," said Conyers, "and put an end to them, from No. One downwards. One could smash up the men, who are all knaves or fools, but the women are the worst. How is that?"

"O, there are two sorts of women who conspire . . . the old and imbecile women who unite conspiracy with superstition . . . the young and flighty women who unite conspiracy with flirtation. Of that second and most amusing sort is Raffaella Ravioli."

Just then arrived Conyers's small but astute groom. He had learnt (in a whisper) that the Marchesa would not return from her evening engagements till one.

"Too late," said Conyers.

"No, my dear fellow, it is never too late for anything. I have often known it too early."

"You will go?"

"Assuredly. I *must* go down to the Earl's to-morrow, and I would not on any account miss this woman. If anything important turns up, I'll drop in at the F. O., and get a glass of that famous Ambassador sherry. Meanwhile, at midnight I must call on that poor perplexed Paulovna."

"It is nearly that, now. I will stroll that way with you. I was glad to be able to suggest a place for her."

"You may as well go in and patronize your old dependent. I shall not be long. Then I shall get some more of your cigarettes on my way to Berkeley Square."

Conyers agreed: and affably drank some brandy-and-water, to the delight of the old lady's heart.

Paulovna seemed gayer, when Mr. Carington entered, than he had seen her for some time. She offered him refreshment, pleasantly saying,

"You must be rewarded for coming to see me at such an hour."

"I am rewarded by seeing you more cheerful. You have thrown away your foolish fears. Now, everything will go well."

"I think it will," she said. "The Prince has been most kind. I almost begin to think I may manage to endure him. Even Ivan is of the same opinion. But do take a glass of wine, Mr. Carington."

"Thanks, I have dined," he said.

"Shall I order coffee?"

"I could not stay." Paulovna's change of demeanour puzzled him. There was about it something strained and false. "I have an immediate engagement at some distance. I leave you with less regret now that you seem likely to be happy. A romantic history may have a noble end. Good-bye, till I meet you again as a Princess."

"Good-by," she said, and taking from her bouquet a scented flower, placed it in his hand. "I shall never forget your kindness."

Mr. Carington threw the flower unthinkingly on the table, for at that moment Demetrius Brakinska rather abruptly entered the room. He was clearly hurried and excited. He said,

"I beg your pardon, sir, but I have a message for you."

Mr. Carington followed him from the room, with a kind word of farewell to Paulovna. She, when the door was closed, sank back in her chair and exclaimed,

"Thank God!"

"Wicked to the end!" said Demetrius in Russian, as they came to the street door. "You were nearly a dead man, sir. She was ordered to kill you, and dared not disobey. If you had drunk her wine or smelt that flower, you'd have been dead by morning. I've disobeyed, and I dare say they'll kill me, and it's the best thing can happen to me."

"Why the devil should they want to kill me, Demetrius?" asked Mr. Carington.

"You know too much, sir."

"Do I? I'll know more to-night. Find a cab, Demetrius. To-morrow I am going into the country, and you shall come with me, to be out of their reach. You can leave the Prince and Princess to themselves now."

"I say," said Conyers, who heard the cab arrive, "are you going to leave me here drinking brandy-and-water all night?"

"Gad, I'd forgotten *you*," said Mr. Carington—"Demetrius, here's my card: take it to the Clarendon, and tell them you're to wait in my room till I come. Come along, Conyers—where shall I put you down?"

"O, I'll go to Berkeley Square with you. I can take the cab home. Do you know, I've had such a lot of affecting reminiscences and brandy-and-water."

"Lovely mixture. I've had neither one nor the other. No. Six is coming round, and feels quite disposed to be a Princess."

"They all like it," said Conyers. "Ah, here we are. Good-night. Don't blow up this unlucky city before morning. I shall dream my pillows are stuffed with Orsini bombs."

Conyers drove off. Mr. Carington walked quietly into the hotel, and said to a servant,

"Has the Marchesa Ravioli returned?"

"She has not, sir. We expect her every moment. Mr. Carington, I think?"

"Ah, William, yes. I knew you at Mivart's. I much want a few minutes with the lady to-night, for I go out of town to-morrow."

He was about to say more, but that instant a carriage drove up, and the brilliant little lady in the white furs alighted, and was followed by her Maltese, which yapped excitedly. Mr. Carington came forward. She knew him at once.

"You here at this hour," she said, "when everybody ought to be in bed. Well, I suppose you must come up. I always take a cup of chocolate the last thing: you can pour it out for me."

At first sight you might have taken this vivacious lady for twenty: but a close observer would soon discover that she was somewhat nearer forty. Very charming still: forty is no contemptible age, though the chit of "sweet seventeen" despises it. Some folk like jam tarts and others woodcock.

When they had entered the Marchesa's apartment, Mr. Carington said:

"Well, Raffaella: you are charming and silly as ever. Why do you come to England with your ridiculous conspiracies?"

She turned pale.

"You know?"

"Of course I know. No. Six has tried to poison me this evening. Is your chocolate safe?"

"O, Frank!"

"Now, Raffaella, you know me of old. I don't believe you would do me any harm, but you are over here to do harm to somebody."

The chocolate was brought in.

"Pour me a cup," he said—"I'll trust *you*—you are a lady of Florence, and Paulovna is a poor Russian serf. But what are you doing to be mixed up with these fools and cowards? I am ashamed of you, Raffaella."

"So you came here to scold me," she said sharply. "Drink your chocolate, if you are not afraid."

"Afraid! and of Raffaella Ravioli! No. But I am ashamed of her. Raffaella Ravioli is afraid, or she would not come over to do dirty and dangerous work in London."

"And of whom am I afraid, pray?"

Mr. Carington put one finger on his lip. She looked a little scared.

"This chocolate is very good," he said, "but might be improved by the merest touch of white curacao. May I order it?"

The liqueur came. The Marchesa sipped her chocolate silently.

"Did you go to Grange's to buy fruit, Raffaella," asked Mr. Carington, "or to meet Prince Oistravieff?"

"I suppose there is nothing remarkable in meeting the Prince in Piccadilly. One meets him everywhere."

"It was rather difficult the other day, when he was in a cellar down by the Thames, in mortal fear of the knout."

"O Frank, you know everything. Why do you talk so sharply to me. We are old friends."

"That is why I talk sharply, Raffaella. Now, tell me, who is No. One?"

"I dare not," she said, with a frightened look.

"*Dare* not! *You* dare not! Pooh, you are not the Raffaella Ravioli I knew in Florence twenty years ago . . . the beautiful gay girl that would have dared anything . . . the creature as wild as a falcon and yet as gentle as a dove. I know how you were drawn into this network of rascality. I know who No. One is, and what he will lose if he loses you. Why are you to be the drudge of the greatest impostor that ever dazzled the eyes of Europe? Come, will you do what I tell you?"

"O Frank, when did I refuse?"

"Why, when you married a blockhead. No matter: have you any important business to do to-morrow?"

"O dear: so much." And she took out some ivory tablets, scrutinizing them carefully. "Yes, I must be out at ten: isn't it dreadfully early?"

"Two, which is the time at present, is still earlier," said Mr. Carington: "but if you will tell your servant to put in a travelling box just enough for a few days in the country, you and I will start together. It will be quite like a runaway match . . . and it will be running away from what you ought never to have undertaken."

"O Frank, I couldn't do it. What might happen to me?"

"Nothing, while you are with me. Just think what I desire to rescue you from. Remember that but for an accident I should this day have been poisoned."

Mr. Carington had his way. He got hold of a sensible porter, and made him order a carriage in time to go first to the Clarendon and then to catch the earliest train north. A maid packed enough for the Marchesa's present needs, while the lady herself slept on a couch, a heap of white furs, guarded by her little Maltese. As to Mr. Carington, he went down stairs, and squeezed ideas out of the night porter, to pass the time.

When the time came for starting, and the carriage was at the door, the Marchesa was so sound asleep that Mr. Carington took her in his arms and carried her down stairs and placed her in it. As he did so he thought of the time when in a lovely garden of Florence, fountain-brightened and alive with the spirit of Boccaccio, he had tossed the tiny beauty above his head like a mere baby. She slept soundly to the Clarendon, where Mr. Carington hastily picked up Demetrius Brakmska and his luggage: she slept soundly to Euston, where the giant Demetrius, under Mr. Carington's directions, took her, a white mass of fur, from the carriage to the railway train: and she awoke not till, some fifty miles from London, the sun warmed the carriages with shafts undimmed by fog. As she awoke she rubbed her eyes, and said,

"O dear me! Where am I? Why, Frank, I verily believe you have run away with me."

"Yes, Raffaella. Won't they be puzzled in London to-day? What will No. One say when they telegraph to him?"

"By Jove," thought Frank Carington to himself, "I am glad I gave Rachette that diamond."

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE LOST LINK.

Astrologos. Cut just one link of the great chain centripetal,
And there's an end of the enormous universe.

Alouette. Tell me which link, Papa. I'll get my scissors out.

The Comedy of Dreams.

MR. CARINGTON took his runaway as rapidly as possible to the Great Hall of Langton Delamere. He knew that the Earl for two reasons would rejoice to receive her there—one, that he liked pretty women, the other, that he hated the society of which she was a member. The Earl, though in his time rather a loose fish in politics as in other matters, naturally took the fine old loyal Toryism of the

Delameres when he inherited the estates. They had fought for the Stuarts in their time, and even now thought the House of Hanover new-fangled, so the democratic conspiracies of the present day were naturally abominable to them. Delamere, moreover, in his wide wanderings had, like Frank Carington, met specimens of the conspirator-tribe that he did not like. So his friend coolly brought the Marchesa on to Delamere, without giving any notice. She, having once got into Mr. Carington's hands, knew full well it were vain to attempt to escape.

Mr. Carington managed to give her a night's rest on the way, and brought her to Delamere about noon, thinking that just then the young people would be out of the way. His conjecture was right, and he got her in quietly, not seeing even Lucy Walters, and telling a confidential servant to make her rooms ready without a word to anybody. Demetrius he took to his own private apartment, telling him to remain as his personal attendant.

"I don't know what you are doing with me, Frank," said the Marchesa, as she crossed the lofty Hall to the rooms chosen for her. "Is this a prison, or a lunatic asylum, or what?"

"It is the house of a friend of mine, Raffaella. But you are to be a prisoner here, and not let any one know where you are. You shall be a happy little bird, in a cosy cage."

"What if I fly away?"

"O, you won't try. Your wings are clipped. I shall send another little bird to be your companion, and the time will pass gaily enough behind the wires."

"O, I know you, Mr. Frank," she said with an ironic curtsy. "You like to run away with pretty women, and keep them in cages. Send me my mate, and mind you don't leave our cage-door open. We may fly to the moon if you do."

The young people were out on their wanderings, Lucy among the rest. Mr. Carington found the Earl alone, and in remarkable health and spirits.

"Ha, Carington," he said, "so you are not lost. I thought not, though you did not deign to write to me. Have you found Oistravieff?"

"O yes, he is safe . . . for the present." And Mr. Carington gave the Earl a brief sketch of the poor Prince's adventures.

"He was well served," said the Earl grimly. "It is a pity they did not flog him well. And so he is married to this woman. How will it end?"

"I don't know. It is a case of diamond cut diamond—a move in the great game between despotism and the democratic societies. I should have interfered farther, but the Princess was ordered to poison me, and tried her best, so I came away."

"They seem to be obedient people in those two societies," said Lord Delamere.

"They are : and the notion of a brotherhood and a sisterhood seems good at first. But men and women move in different cycles—which, by the way, is the chief cause of unhappy marriages."

"What do you mean?" said the Earl.

"It is clear enough. The twenty-four hours of the day might be marked on a dial differently for different people. The common measure is the difficulty. I am most brilliant at four in the morning: what can I do with a friend who culminates at eight in the evening, or with a lady who culminates at kettledrum? There is a great reform needed: people ought to be sent to school to adjust themselves to each other. Blockheads wonder at your saying *Good morning* when with them it is afternoon: they confound noon with midday, unaware that it is simply *nona hora*. For a labourer who gets up at three, midday is noon: for you and me, if we rise at ten, noon is seven, and the proper dinner-hour."

"Well, let us return to our conspirators," said the Earl. "That plan of which you have given me some vague notion, does not succeed, you think?"

"Not for long. The complete isolation and secrecy of the head of the plot is excellent. But the men who rise to the higher grades are resolute unscrupulous fellows, born assassins; and the women who rise to the higher grades are clever brilliant women, born coquettes. It was for finding this out they tried to poison me: but the discovery has enabled me to inflict upon them a puzzling blow. I have broken a link. Before I explain, will you forgive me for having without leave brought you a lady visitor?"

"I forgive you. If she's pretty and clever, bring her to see me."

"'Tis the old story with you, Delamere. When you are tired of pretty girls, Eden will flow backwards. She's a most fascinating creature, of that uncertain age which men of taste prefer. She is in that suite of rooms where your favourite Huntress Diana stands. I want her to be kept perfectly quiet, and for no one to see her except Elinor."

"Why Elinor?" said the Earl abruptly.

"Because Elinor is my favourite, and is a good girl, and will ask no questions, and endure no gossip."

"Well, I think she is a good girl and a clever one, from what little I have seen of her in the few days you have been away. I had one or two nice little talks with her. Both those young fellows seem to prefer her to my Lucy. But come, who is the mysterious lady?"

"No. Two. I have broken a chief link. She is the only one of the Silent Sisters who has access to No. One, or who really knows who he is, whatever others may guess. Through her all orders pass to the others. She is an old friend of mine: I knew her a mere child at Florence. I found her out as No. Two by a chance gesture

which I noticed at a ball. I saw her in London by the merest accident."

Mr. Carington told the story of the Grosvenor Gate meeting, and the street-boy's promptitude, and all that ensued, much amusing Lord Delamere.

"It was an amazing clever thing of you, Carington," says he.

"Well, I think I have served them out for trying to poison me. With your permission, I should like to keep this little conspirator a prisoner here for a time. I want regularly to puzzle them. Unless I am much mistaken, the people at Thomas's have not the least notion where she has gone."

"Was there no one to watch her?"

"O dear, no. No one dare watch her. She is the head of the sisterhood. The sisterhood will get no orders. No. One, when no despatches reach him, will be in a state of abject terror."

"Not for the first time," said the Earl, "nor probably the last. It is a grand stroke of yours, Carington, and may eventually send the fellows into exile. But is the lady submissive? I am a little surprised at her letting you run away with her. Had it been a younger man, now——"

"When I was a younger man, and she was the prettiest little unfledged rogue in the world, I used to pet her and romp with her. She married a scampish Marquis, who neglected her, but left her plenty of money when he came to some disreputable end, I forget what. Then she was seen in Paris, and got drawn gradually into this ridiculous conspiracy, and by aptitude for subtlety and secresy, for courage and cleverness, has become No. Two . . . therefore the sole female *confidante* of No. One. If I can manage it, they shall never communicate again."

"Verily I am delighted," said the Earl. "You know how I despise all conspirators, and that conspirator above all others. Keep her here as long as you please. Let Elinor be her companion: I shall want Lucy, of course."

"Yes, and I don't wish her to see Lucy. She is not a child to be trusted with secrets, is she?"

"Difference of education," said the Earl.

"Partly, no doubt. However, I want secresy. To Elinor I shall tell nothing, except to be secret—and she has never disobeyed me yet. I have a Russian fellow with me, also a conspirator, who can wait upon her."

"Confound it, Carington, we shall all be murdered in our beds."

"Well, there are nice cosy vaults in Carlisle Cathedral—you and I are not of the Bob Acres type."

"You quite think they won't find out where your Marchioness has flown to?"

"Most unlikely—an early train—luggage left behind—nobody

near who would be likely to enquire. Remember No. Two is the practical head of the sisterhood; no one dare watch her."

"It is immensely amusing, Carington. Let her stay here as long as you and she like, but you must let me see her soon."

"To-day, if you like. Now, with your permission, I'll go and see whether those two boys have returned, or have run away with Elinor and Lucy altogether."

"Send Lucy to me, if you see her," said the Earl.

When Mr. Carington entered the Great Hall, he received welcome, for the four young people had just returned from a brisk walk. He looked rapidly at them, and came to the sudden conclusion that Frank Noel was triumphant, Fitz-Rupert savage, Elinor satisfied, and Lucy jealous.

"I don't want that boy's heart caught on the rebound," he thought.

When they had all welcomed him, Frank Noel said,

"I am very glad you have just arrived, for I am called away to Salisbury. The Canon is ill, and wants to see me."

"I fear you have neglected him, Frank," said Mr. Carington. "I hope the illness is not serious."

"The letter was from his man-servant," said Frank Noel, "who is the most unintelligible old fellow I know. I hope there is not much the matter. But I have ordered a trap for the next train, and Fitz-Rupert is going south with me."

"You!" said Mr. Carington to Fitz. "What's *your* hurry? Not an invalid uncle, I'll swear."

"No, but business to be done at the Court," said Rupert. "A new branch railway wants to run right through my favourite conservatories . . . in fact I believe they want to make them a terminus, all the glass being ready. I mean to fight them."

Mr. Carington understood, and intelligently dismissed his young friends, as the omnibus came round to the front. The meaning of Fitz-Rupert's humorous excuses was clear enough.

"Give me early news of Canon Lovelace, Frank," he said as they drove away.

Then he turned to the girls, whom he at once thought he quite understood. He told Lucy the Earl wanted her, and was alone with Elinor in the Great Hall.

"Well, child," he said, "are you glad to see me again? How have you enjoyed yourself? Which of those young fellows is most in love with you, or are you most in love with?"

"How dreadfully inquisitive you are," said Elinor. "Yes, I *am* glad to see you when you don't ask questions. I hope that is a dutiful reply."

"It is your duty to answer questions, Miss Elinor. However, as you talk of being dutiful, here is a chance. I have been away on an adventure."

"O, Mr. Carington—at your age!"

"Yes, at my age—and more fortunate than some young gentlemen. I have brought away the lady, and she is here."

"Now, Mr. Carington! You are joking."

"Not at all, Elinor. She is in the Diana rooms. She is an Italian lady, and I want you to be very kind to her."

"O let me go to her at once. I shall be delighted."

"Don't be impetuous, child. Listen, Elinor—you are a sensible little rogue."

"Thank you, sir," with a demure curtsy.

"No one is to know who this lady is, and as few as possible that she is here. I want you to look after her and be her companion as much as you can, which you won't find difficult, now Frank Noel is gone to Salisbury."

Elinor pinched him.

"What do I care about Mr. Noel?" said she.

"Dear me, how should I know?" asked Mr. Carington. "I have always understood that well-educated young ladies studied every possible subject except—young gentlemen. I think their instructresses quite right to turn their studies away from that slightly fascinating theme. But come, Elinor, I want you to see this lady, the Marchesa Ravioli, and I want you to prevent other people from seeing her—not even your friend Lucy."

"Not even Lucy!" she said in a slightly contemptuous tone. "But this is very mysterious, Mr. Carington. I feel frightened already."

"There is a mystery in it with which you are not to trouble your little head. Can you resist temptation in this way? Can you be in company with a mysterious lady and decline to know from her who she is or what she is, or why she is in this old Hall?"

"I think I can," she said, "I don't care about mysteries much. Shall I go and see the lady now? Of course she is nice or you wouldn't care about her."

"O, Elinor," quoth Carington, "what a piece of self-praise! You know I care more about you than anybody, so how amazing nice you must think *yourself*!"

"I am not at all ashamed," she said simply, "of thinking myself nice because *you* like me. Perhaps I am a little proud that you are kind. I have often wondered what there is about me that makes you care for me at all: and I sometimes think you imagine me a great deal better and cleverer than I truly am."

"I am particularly fond of flattery, Elinor," said Carington, "and you are a most subtle little flatterer. However I may say, my child, what I think I have said before, that I love you because I loved both your father and your mother; and I love you for your own sake, because you are true, and pure, and witty, and wise—the best little girl I know."

"Ah, you flatter too," said Elinor. "And yet—well, I know you are a good judge. I begin to be proud of myself because you praise me."

"Be as proud as you like, child: expand exuberant petticoats, like the peacock. If I find you grow very foolish, I shall have you whipt and sent to bed. Come, let us visit the Marchesa Ravioli, the lady who has run away with me."

They passed from the Great Hall to the Diana rooms. The Ravioli lay on a couch, all white still, and her little white dog flew at them fiercely. Indeed I think he imprinted his tiny teeth on Mr. Carington's calf, but that gentleman did not care about trifles.

"Ah, Raffaella," he said, "do you like your prison? I have brought you a gaoler. This is Elinor. You must obey her orders, and see no one without her leave. Above all, you must not write or receive any letters."

"O dear," said the Marchesa, springing so suddenly from her sofa that her little dog broke into a snow storm of white barks; "I wish I had never learnt to read or write. Reading books and writing letters are so dreadful, they make my head ache."

"What *do* you like, then?" asked Carington.

"O, thousands of things! Eating, drinking, dancing, riding, driving, flirting. Now tell me, Miss——what—O, Elinor, I beg pardon—tell me, Elinor, when you have read a three-volume novel, what is there in it?"

"That depends on the novel," said Elinor.

"O you innocent child! Why, all you want in your novel is this sort of thing:—

'The Hero. Darling, how I love you!

'The Heroine. Do you really, dearest! So do I.

'The Hero. Our parents are cruel, but . . .

'The Heroine. Yes. Let us kiss each other.'

They kiss in the first volume, and are happily married or unhappily separated in the third. Now, Elinor, tell me the truth, have you never squeezed into five minutes something much nicer than that?"

"Raffaella," said Carington, "don't you be too inquisitive."

"O, but I like what Raffaella has said—I shall call you Raffaella, you know, as you call me Elinor. I am not ashamed of anything I have done. If one lives life well, there is no need to read love stories. Several men have pretended to be in love with me—I have enjoyed the little comedy—there is no mistaking the real thing."

"Ah, then you know it, you naughty girl," said Carington. "Are you hit very hard?"

"I shall not marry without your permission, sir," said Elinor.

"Dear me, what a dutiful daughter! For, of course, she is your daughter, Frank?" said the Marchesa.

"Faith, I wish she was ; though, in truth, she is just as good, and more obedient than many daughters. Only I fear, from what she says, she has fallen in love with somebody without asking permission."

"I remember an old village rhyme," said Elinor, "which I always thought good.

'The girl who gives her heart away
May wish she had it again, some day :
But the girl who has no heart
Gives herself for a raspberry tart.'

Which sort do you think I belong to, Mr. Carington?"

"You are a pert little minx, sometimes, and have given me lots of trouble, you know, which I shall charge in the bill of your future husband."

"But I haven't got a future husband."

"Haven't you? How will the future bill sound?"

'Frank Noel Esq., to Frank Carington, his godfather, debtor.'

"Now, Mr. Carington, you are too teasing," said Elinor. "What do I care about Frank?"

"What, indeed? And what will he say to some of the items?"

'Five hundred sendings to bed, at a shilling each.—£25.

'Two thousand whippings at half-a-crown.—£250.'

"How you tease the child, Frank," interrupted Raffaella, lazily lying on her sofa, and seeing with dramatic eye what easy intelligence there was between Mr. Carington and Elinor. "Why do you tease her? which likes it best; you? or she? Frank, you are just as much a boy now as when you tossed me over your head in those Florence gardens, shocking the statues of the nymphs."

"I hope to be always a boy," he said, "and to be a boy when I enter the next world."

"But was he such a tease so long ago?" asked Elinor. "He sometimes almost makes me angry, never quite. Was it the same with you?"

"I was a little girl," said the Marchesa. "You see I am not very big now. There is such lovely turf in the Ravioli Palace at Florence. He would come behind me as soft as a cat, and catch me by the waist, and throw me over his head: then if I scolded he said nobody could see my ankles unless they were up in a balloon. It was no good to be angry: he *would* be wicked."

"You were a charming little girl, Raffaella," said Mr. Carington, "and those Ravioli gardens will be a picture in my mind for ever. Do you remember climbing that immense orange tree, and having to drop into my arms because you were afraid to come down."

"I should think I did," she said. "Ah, we are older and wiser now."

"Why, Elinor," said Mr. Carington, "what is that pretty song of yours? It just fits the moment."

Elinor, always obedient, went to the piano and sang:—

"Older, but not half so wise :
Now we have a sense of shame.
Once we played, boy and maid,
Void of thought, a happy game.

"Older, but not half so wise :
Now we have a sense of gold.
Long ago gold might go . . .
Coin might wait till we grew old.

"Older, but not half so wise :
Now we have a sense of sin.
Children fair may not dare
Love and laugh and woo and win."

"That song, Raffaella," said Mr. Carington, "is much to the point, whosoever made it. I suppose there *are* a few innocent folk about, beside you and me and my little Elinor. But really, when one considers the way in which people now advertise their virtues, I begin to doubt it. When folk brag of virtue, it argues a considerable acquaintance with vice."

"Let me sing you a little song," said the lady in white, springing like a white squirrel from sofa to piano.

" 'I loved once.
Ah me !
I was a dunce,
So was he.

'I loved twice.
O rage !
Two white mice
In a cage.

'I loved thrice.
Vain desire.
One was ice.
One was fire.' "

At this point a servant entered to ask if the Marchesa Ravioli could receive the Earl of Delamere.

(To be continued.)

ART IN THE HIGHER ALPS.

IN several London newspapers the collection of Alpine paintings, by M. Loppé, lately to be seen in the rooms of the Alpine Club, has been warmly welcomed as a contribution to our knowledge of scenery of which English climbers are fond to claim the discovery, if not the monopoly. But it was clear that in many instances, the patriotic press desired rather that our sympathy with Alpine "derring-do" should be roused, than that we should learn any lessons, or enjoy any delights of art, while staring at the terrors of glacier and aiguille. That there is little original or intelligent appreciation of art in the London world is sufficiently manifested by incidents of the yearly promenade before the products of the English palette in Burlington House, and by the popularity and purchases which so heavily weight artists, who might if independent do better than work at the will of their public. This is a hackneyed complaint, which does not make it the less real, and probably no pains in criticism, no exhortation or remonstrance will develop the sense of what is noble and beautiful in form and colour, in our multitude who profess culture and possess the omnipotence and omniscience that goes with unlimited wealth. Yet apart from their interest as the happy hunting-grounds of Long Vacation athletes, the artistic treatment of scenes hitherto, and perhaps prudently, deemed beyond the range of painting, deserves some serious attention. Two pictures of M. Loppé's, who has offered them for the first time this year to the Fates of the Royal Academy, are hung so that there is little hope they will be carefully studied; there is the more reason to attempt some account of the forty-six paintings to which his comrades of the Alpine Club have given the best hospitality they could offer, if not a perfect light.

Once the old superstitions concerning the "Montagnes maudites" of central Europe had been dispelled, and reverends, professors, college youths and muscular spinsters, had upset Chamouny traditions, a sort of contempt set in for the bergschrunds, séracs, and couloirs that used to give harrowing interest to Alpine adventure. With the conquest of the Matterhorn, set in reaction. The dragon of the Alps has been bridled with convenient "garde-fous," and so there remains no blue riband for climbers at the disposal of the fourth estate. The highlands of Asia are beyond our sympathies. Oxford and Cambridge can have no race for them, nor are they within thrilling distance when "fatal accident" in large type gives to the aspirant for Alpine honour the fullest glory that the *Times* can bestow. But though the Alpine summits be a conquered territory, and all the renown to be got out of them be stale and unprofitable, yet the delight in highlands which belongs to our race and its kindred races is not less, and there would appear by the increasing company that take their pastime in such high places as they

may attain, some survival of love for the "upper floor of the world" whence we came. What better revives sufferers from the fatigues of commerce, science, or literature, than the nimble air now within forty-eight hours of London gases? Those who are tired of amusement do not equally appreciate it. They seldom do more than gape from their big hotel at the silver crests and cloud wrack that bound the local view. But the intoxication of the glacier, the enthusiasm of height, is known to those who best deserve to know it. It needs no apology. It is a healthy reversion to Aryan instinct.

But while the upper world gives, it also demands power from its visitors. Physical fatigue attacks the body, which must not seek rest in the region of frost-bites. Nature is inhospitable to those who visit her laboratory where are prepared the rivers and still pastures of the plain. The calm which is required for exercise of the imaginative and creative faculties is disturbed by the complete novelty of all circumstance. When a stray artist wanders above the snow-line a thousand strangenesses perplex him. He sees, but he cannot assimilate what he sees. The strain on his powers prevents thought except of his best path among the translucent but terrible crevasses and the shattered rocks. The desire of his eye is to take in the meaning rather than the beauty of what is around.

In most records of Alpine discovery there is therefore singular silence touching the pictorial aspects of the higher levels. More thoughtful climbers have interested themselves in the scientific truths of glacier action and rock formation. Meteorologists have weighed the air, and counted the speed of the 'tourmentes' that rage around the battered crests of the upper ranges—but there has been little said of the forms and colours of those primæval landscapes, which might have belonged to earth as it was during the second 'day' of creation.

No doubt the artist-perception under the most favourable circumstances is rare among us, and when our travellers affect it in new scenes they often fall into silly detail or sillier rhodomontade. It is needless to add that there have been in English literature perhaps the noblest of all descriptions of mountain form, but the beaten track of criticism is rarely left without speedy blundering by ordinary Englishmen. Books abound on glacier theories, on the origin of protogine aiguilles and calcareous crests; there is a whole literature, philosophical and sportive, about the great European range, but of our countrymen Mr. Ruskin stands alone in conscience of its relation to the human imagination. He has given voice with eloquence to those sympathies by which it is brought within the region of art and the possibility of pictorial expression—but with an eloquence that is by its fulness depressing and even hindering to the artist, the limitations of whose palette and canvas must be considered in his effort to express Alpine scenery.

The calm but equally earnest language of De Saussure expresses within a narrower range the influences of the higher landscape as he

saw it from the Aiguille du Gouter. But the sort of fear with which he, the first intellectual explorer of the glacier zone, was inspired, checked in him the secondary and more personal perceptions possible to those who are familiar with such scenery, and which give birth to pictures, written or painted.

A sufficient acquaintance for art purposes is, however, rarely attained with the livid summits of perpetual snow and the grisly sierras of tempest-shattered rock, for study of their proportions whether of colour or size, for measurement of distance and judgment of the novel conditions of the thin atmosphere. In the dull light at great elevations the plains below are seen as in eclipse, between lurid clouds unbrightened by the filtered sunshine that gives whiteness to them when they are above us. Checking our free reception of facts external to us at these heights is, besides, a weight of self-consciousness. Little if any responsive life helps us to confront the vast phenomena, so that they are heavy to bear. Space inebriates the imagination, as the thin air excites the nerves. To Saussure it seemed as if he had survived the universe and that its corpse lay stretched before him.

We must not therefore wonder that Alpine climbers seldom balance their intellectual and muscular faculties sufficiently for due exercise of their imagination, if by chance they possess a sound imagination capable of witnessing to truth. Meantime, the London public is not unacquainted with artists who profess to tell on canvas the mountain handiwork of God. Fireworks of the palette, green, lilac, and orange have lit up toppling peaks and feather-bed *névé*, for the edification of Piccadilly and Pall Mall. But if curious as studies of the Unknowable, they are not true, which is after all a capital defect. Truth is a first and last necessity when scenery is altogether unlike that with which we are familiar. Whimsical fantasias on light and shade, and on cool or warm greys, and greens, cannot be tried except on hackneyed landscape. Yet nowhere has truth been more flagrantly insulted, than in the representation of the ice world. The little daubs in '*gouache*,' that abound in Genevan and Interlaken shops, are scarcely more conscientious than some astonishing pictures of the Montanvert and Grindelwald scenery, "painted out of the artist's own head," as children say. But even a dozen journeymen as far as the Jardin, might not have corrected their fancies. The man who is not by habit and taste almost a resident in the higher atmosphere, is apt, as even Saussure did, to "trample the snow under his feet, with a sort of anger rather than with any sense of pleasure."

And even supposing him calmly established among ice-cliffs and crevasses with all necessary materials of his art, and a pulse not many degrees over 80, the painter meets difficulties in the merely imitative study of what is around him, that are well nigh insurmountable. Conventionalisms of painting which are accepted as truths more habitually than we like to believe, must be abandoned where blue and white enter largely into a foreground that depends

on the gloom of sky and cloud for its force. Even to the critic it is at first an effort to follow the quietest rendering of such a landscape, and only is it made acceptable by stress of truthfulness, though the effort is abundantly rewarded by ultimate perception of their novel beauty.

The painter of them must be pre-Raphaelite in his simple accuracy, for his public is primitive in its ignorance of the forms and harmonies which he would represent; no dilettantism is possible, no recipes can be applied by cognoscenti who are quite at fault. This is hard on the painter who cannot exist morally or materially without the sympathy of his world; and our eclectic world is crowded with cognoscenti. His patrons are to be looked for in what M. Taine calls "an industrious and learned democracy." Can the artist in love with the difficult mountain heights translate their truths so as to be not altogether in discord with the thought and emotion of his epoch? He undertakes a "tour de force" that seems hardly consistent with the principles and ends of art. Yet there is hope for him in the "industrious and learned democracy." It tends yearly more and more to mountain exploration, and a considerable fraction of its best men passionately love the Alpine ice world and its antitheses to overgrown cities and fat commercial plains. So though his public be small, the painter who can bring that ice-world within the magic circle of human art has his "raison d'être." He informs the developing instinct of its beauty.

If we allow that during the changes of the last fifty years, there has been exaggerated nature-worship; that the mingled cynicism and optimism of the revolutionary epoch which opened on Europe when sufficiently saturated by Rousseau's doctrines, have too high exalted a daisy or blade of grass, still there is no need for controversy on what may be called the Pope *v.* Cowper debate. Improved knowledge blurs old lines of demarcation between man and "nature." The forces of the mountain world, the crystals of the infant glacier and its onward march are germane to us in the methods of their action. The old-fashioned notion that "our love of nature is the measure of our dislike to our kind" should surely vanish as the unity of the human organism with that of the humblest lichen is more fully realized. Possibly the delight or the awe which is experienced in "savage" landscape is a measure of the relief felt in the absence of social discord and misery, but spleenful humour rarely lasts among the mountains if only the climber can forget his literary superstitions about what he ought or ought not to feel. Not alienation but increased sympathy with every manifestation of "nature" comes of that worship specially rendered on the hill tops and high places, which is no new emotion.

De Saussure, first of moderns, claimed the "*Montagnes maudites*" of Savoy as a place where is bred keen and noble delight. Bravais, the comrade of Martin in the chief scientific ascent of Mont Blanc, could not refrain, in describing a sunset from the summit, from the enthusiastic declaration, "It seemed as if an invisible being were

placed on a throne that was fringed with fire, and that angels with flaming wings bowed before him in adoration."

Preaching is a little out of fashion now, except such lay sermons as undo religion and uproot morality, yet as we can never really do without preaching it may be observed that the glacier wildernesses preach not less practically than the grass of the field. "The mind in their solitude," writes Principal Forbes, "becomes capable of seriously entertaining thoughts which in hours of luxury or business would have been instantly discarded,"—a remark so obviously true that it has become a truism; but he adds, which is more immediately germane to M. Loppé's pictures, as to all pictures of the higher ranges, that such scenery "draws forth to daylight the capacities of that dimly seen inward being which now begins to assert its claim to individuality, but which, amidst the busy turmoil of life, might remain a secret and a puzzle even to itself . . . The seeds of a poetic temperament usually germinate amidst mountain scenery." "An influence," declares Professor Tyndall, "seemed to proceed from the scene direct to the soul! the delight and exultation experienced were not those of reason or of knowledge, but of Being. There was something incongruous, if not profane, in allowing the scientific faculty to interfere when silent worship was the 'reasonable service.'" Mr. Ruskin is, as all men know, the "passionate pilgrim" of mountain glory and gloom, but he is perhaps over-penetrated with poetic sentiment to judge calmly the possibilities of painting the landscape he so intensely feels. In such scenery repulsive eccentricity is but too likely to result from the very intoxication of their immeasurable beauty, and, however fashionable in a free-thinking world, eccentricity is intolerable in the solemn presence of the higher mountains.

Yet art must not shrink from sympathy with its epoch. Physical manifestations of the natural laws which are to so many now the final cause, should, when they can be made subjects for painting, be seriously and reverently respected by artists. Yet they must remain true to their mission of teaching by the senses, the harmonies, or in other words, the relative proportions of things perceptible to sense. Hence the prudent, if somewhat timid narrowness, which selects subjects of which by an intellectual process we already know the relations. Yet it is a noble rashness that with widening science would attempt to bring within the limits of art, scenes of which the relations to man and his existence are unfamiliar: rashness as regards popularity, but not any challenge to the true principles of painting.

The attempt then of M. Loppé deserves attention and some patience in considering how far he has succeeded. No other painter combines some qualifications which he possesses as exponent of the snow and ice world. He is senior of the honorary members of the Alpine Club by good right; for the heights hurriedly visited by travellers the most intrepid, have been for many years his habitual sketching grounds. Having served an apprenticeship to Mediter-

reanean and Italian colouring, he turned with preference to the finer tones and gradations of the snow and ice in their manifold aspects, whether under the summer sun on the mountains, or during winter in the lower and cultivated forecourts of the Alps. No living painter has more conscientiously striven to solve the problems of grey and white as expressions not only of light and shade but of colour. Yet the artistic solution of them, is but a part of the task he has set himself. Possibly, his expression of winter scenery, true to the sentiment of the season and the lower Alps, may be most popular, but on the pictures in this class, labour and genius have been expended in less proportion than in his effort to reduce to the proportions of art, the translucent foregrounds, the murky mists, the dark heaven and grisly spine of the upper range.

Extreme accuracy has been his guide, attained by continuous study, which is apparent even though the critic cannot by his personal knowledge verify it. There is speedy consciousness of unreality when it exists even in paintings of unknown scenes, but those most conversant with glaciers may be here content. The hot controversies maintained since Rendu and Forbes certified the motion of the ice cataracts, may be carried on before these studies of curve and cleavage. It is not in the province of art to catalogue dirt bands and number the lines of névé growth any more than to make panoramic maps of the serried mountain crests, but the knowledge of them should be in the artist's eye and memory. They are the foundation on which he rests his interpretation of the evanescent impressions that he puts on canvas, and that he would communicate to others.

In face of M. Loppé's pictures, the question put by sceptics of the wide range of beauty, is of course suggested. As the "Saturday Review" asked apropos of them, "Why take pleasure in the abomination of desolation in the immediate vicinity of Charing Cross?" Traditions of the two Englishmen who in 1741 penetrated the valley of Chamouny armed to the teeth and in mortal terror, must have suggested the epithet. Not a hundred years ago, indeed, the snow valleys were said to exhale poisonous heat productive of fatal torpor. The Isis of the Alps could not, it was believed, be unveiled with impunity in her weird laboratory. For us no superstition hangs about her, yet the strange noises, the perpetual rifting and riving of unseen forces through the still afternoon air, the rush of rocks, "devil's cavalry" Professor Tyndall calls them, curiously excite the imagination, which is, however, perhaps even more affected by the terrible morning silence of spaces confusedly estimated by the inexperienced fancy. The muffled sound of his voice, the dark heaven he had seen above, the ice crags of the Dome du Gouter told on Jacques Balmat, who was first to find a way up Mont Blanc, so that on his return from his first attempt he threw himself silent and stunned on some hay in an outhouse, afraid to see family or friends till he had recovered nerve. Such extreme excitement belonged only to the first

explorers, but a large measure remains for those who visit the glimmering glacier region. If heroes of the merely acrobatic sort dashed its charm for a time, science has corrected their flippant familiarity by opening to us the secret travail of forces that work with an intensity in the higher reservoirs of heat and cold, which we of the plain can hardly guess; and science has increased the multitude which by its simple attrition quickens emotion. The forms of the crystallized water and the plain-making *aiguilles* have become instinct with life and "sweet reasonableness" to us as their laws have been traced. The intellect recognises in them noblest manifestations of the eternal order. May not art further discover to us the visible harmonies of this order, and so be in this matter, as ever, the friend and complement of science?

Many years since Mr. Ruskin expressed a hope that some first-rate artists would attempt to paint snow, not in its winter aspect and somewhat vulgar expression of dull and cruel opposition to life—but as it is seen under warm light. "Its curves are of inconceivable perfection and changefulness; its surface and transparency alike exquisite; its light and shade of inexhaustible variety and inimitable finish, the shadows sharp, pale, and of heavenly colour, the reflected lights intense and multitudinous, and mingled with the sweet occurrences of transmitted light. No mortal hand can approach the majesty or loveliness of it, yet it is possible, by care and skill, at least, to suggest the preciousness of its forms and intimate the nature of its light and shade: but this has never been attempted; it could not be done except by artists of a rank exceedingly high, and there is something about the feeling of snow in ordinary scenery which such men do not like. But when the same qualities are exhibited on a magnificent Alpine scale, and in a position where they interfere with no feeling of life, I see not why they should be neglected as they have hitherto been, unless that the difficulty of reconciling the brilliancy of snow with a picturesque light and shade is so great that most good artists disguise or avoid the greater part of upper Alpine scenery, and hint at the glacier so slightly that they do not feel the necessity of careful study of its forms." The critic might have added that few artists have constitutional strength for the necessary studies at great heights, and still fewer have the courage to face unpopularity and pursue beauty that holds forth empty hands to her votaries. The English public is timid. It seldom buys according to its own sense of truth and beauty, which, indeed, is hardly capable of walking without leading-strings. We all know how artists are kept to styles and subjects in which they have made a notorious "hit," and so they turn round and round in their "professional fairy land," a land of impossible effects, tricks of colour, "ficelles," and general unreality that could hardly have existence were it not for the complacent know-nothingness of our monied cognoscenti.

Yet for a' that and a' that, there is an increasing class to which the ice world of the Alps, the summer pleasaunce of Europe, is an ever-flowing fountain of awe and delight, and the first true painter of

its beauty cannot surely fail of that greeting without which possibly art has little right to exist. As yet, unhackneyed and undebased by ignoble association, the wilderness lifted mid-way to heaven between the three great countries, France, Germany, and Italy, surely merits the touch of art. The value of the Alps, and especially of their wilder recesses as a place of spiritual retreat from the bustle and discord of the European plain, is yearly more felt. Different powers, both of soul and body, are brought into play in these desert places, and if the conceit be admissible, it may be said that the Edel-weiss is but typical of the white thoughts that blossom for those who climb the heights and rejoice in them :

“—since to look on noble forms
Makes noble, through the sensuous organism
That which is higher.”

But it is allowable to sympathise with the first despair of the artist when he confronts the multiplicity in unity which meets him at every turn of these vast prospects. The serried pines that hang like a mantle on the mountain spurs, even the crowding blossoms eagerly pressing up the slopes, confuse by their multitude, that is always, however, subservient to the upper height and its impression on the imagination. The clear atmosphere forbids the aid of smudge and scumble, and requires sleight of drawing not easily or hastily acquired. Truth cannot be sacrificed to expediency without such miscarriage of art as has befallen even Calame, the chief master of the Swiss school. To attain popularity he attempted too much, for great modesty and self-forgetfulness is necessary in any attempt to express the sentiment excited by mountain prospects of the higher sort. St. Preux's feeling, often quoted as it is, is so true that it may bear one more repetition : “*Les méditations*,” he writes to Julie, of the Alps, “*y prennent je ne sais quel caractère grand et sublime, proportionné aux objets qui nous frappent, je ne sais quelle volupté tranquille qui n'a rien d'âcre et de sensuel.*” Yet, in this sanctum sanctorum of purified delight in beauty, unhappily the travelling artist even of the better sort, eager to “do something” that will give vent to his first gush of admiration, falls into the picturesque, worst enemy of Alpine art. He clothes the scene with Scotch or Welsh air, caricatures the yellow gleams on pastures of the middle height, puts brown water in glacier brooks, and highland mosses to strengthen his foreground, and invents another studio landscape, only less composed and balanced than the average. Swiss scenery, in its ordinary expression on the walls of our picture bazaars, is a pain, and the genius has not yet come who can combine perpetual snow and foreground cultivation as is commonly attempted.

And if the painter, full of memories of this or that salon, find the outskirts of the great mountains bewildering—even a Quixote of the brush may be abashed when, physically tired, dazzled by reflected light so that he is chiefly conscious of darkness, and confused by new

form and colour, he finds himself, we will suppose, in the second stage of the Mont Blanc ascent, nearing the Grand Plateau, or threading his way through the ice-fall of the Col du Géant. His recipes of colour and effect cannot serve him; yet strength and time forbid his studying the landscape as a conscientious student. It would require a fresh education of eye and brush. Favourite "vehicles" will not serve him in his attempt to render symphonies of blue and white without help from "warm" foreground and conventional skies. The painter of these pure forms of water, these masses of translucent crystals, these veined cliffs of colour in which all that is most beautiful in sky and cloud is concentrated not only apparently but truly, must be sufficiently master of his art to play as it were on one chord. It is noteworthy what can be done by the simplest combinations of colour when the laws of light are faithfully obeyed; and it seems best in dealing with glacier aspects to avoid foregrounds in earthy and violent contrast. Lovely as are the rosy slopes of rhododendrons seen against the *mer de glace* at the Montanvert, they are disappointing in art, and a certain incompatible heaviness vexes the eye when incidents of the lower valley are employed to enhance the ideal loveliness of the summer snow.

As mere antitheses of colour, sunsets and sunrises in the glacier world are temptations, only, however, to be yielded to with reticence. The combination of aerial glory and the deathfulness of the livid snow is almost too obvious an appeal to particular emotions. There is already excess of all that can excite awe and surprise in that region of which the terrible beauty has been described by Mr. Ruskin: "The glory of its aspect fades into blanched fearfulness, its purple walls are rent into grisly rocks, its silver fret-work saddened into wasting snow—the storm-brand of ages is on its breast, the ashes of its own ruin lie solemnly on its white raiment."

One important title to our respect for M. Loppé's work is the evident delight he took in it. While he did not neglect the singular beauty of the Margälin See, or the wild discord of the Zermatt ranges, his chief field has been the Mont Blanc district. For several reasons the venerable chief of the Alps appeals most directly to the imagination. It is most colossal in detail of spur and ice-fall, and noblest in the very monotony of its buttresses, the folds of its pine forests, the curves of its glaciers. The awe of its livid wildernesses, the breadth of its sunstricken slopes, affects us most.

Still the levels of the Aletsch Glacier in his picture of the Jungfrau, the vast fields of the Gorner ice in the Monte Rosa group, are specimens of M. Loppé's skill, not only in rendering noble impressions, but in managing perspective by extraordinary gradation of tone. The modulation of colour by which he has helped our inexperienced eyes to judge of these snow distances is rare now-a-days, when surfaces in landscape are left as bare as so much coloured paper. The difficulties he has conquered may be gauged by the failure of photography, probably most complete in the higher Alpine scenery, of which it cannot express the leading truths.

It is not within the aim of these remarks to discuss M. Loppé's studies, however courageous in their truth, which are but subservient to his higher work. The unpleasantness of one or two among them is partly explicable by some of the preceding observations. His rhododendrons, however faithful, are somehow inharmonious, as are always flower foregrounds, when accessory to the upper snows. There may be charming studies *in situ* of the flowers, but the sentiment dominant in such is incompatible with the sentiment of the higher ranges. The artist who, by eight ascents of Mont Blanc and innumerable excursions of yet more ambitious mountaineering, has learned the secrets of wider vision, is best employed when he tells them to his public, and only uses flowers as quite subsidiary incidents of his foreground.

M. Loppé's winter pictures are products of his study of snow in all its effects. They read lessons of composition and faithful work to those who manufacture pictorial furniture, but they are only padding to the main interest of his work. His painting of the Lake of Lucerne, transparent in winter sunshine, his grim study of Sixt in its winter pall, are clever and interesting in their management of greys, but his right place is among the exquisite lines of glacier cleavage, keen as sword-edge, yet noble in their sweep as befits the mountain form that they express. They suggest crowding thoughts that need not here be catalogued, any more than the emotions roused by effects of light at sea may be. While the temptation to overpaint the contrasts of sunset and sunrise is confessed, it cannot be denied how they are intensified in beauty on the vast snow-slopes so sensitive to aerial colour. The very ground beneath our feet flushes and dies in response to the sun, and the livid ice in shade adds to the glory of the higher clouds, until the sense of it becomes almost oppressive. A hint—and little more is possible to art—of such a scene is given in a little picture of M. Loppé's, that is called "Sunset from the Summit of the Aiguille du Gouter," even better than in some of his more ambitious efforts to seize the indescribable effect. Small as it is the picture has evidently been a favourite child of his. The depth and purity at once of its colour is a good example of his work.

Some may read these words who mean this summer to pay or renew their due homage to the Alps. Their impressions will be at once strengthened and corrected if they have given an hour's intelligent study to the pictures at the Alpine Club. Their delight will be increased and more intelligent appreciation secured of what, indeed, is at first sight too often confusedly wondered at. It is surely time to educate the eyes that look on the beauty of the perpetual snow, lest in its highest manifestations they "miss the sight of what they do not know beforehand to be visible." No such means of education in the noble and pure beauty of glacier scenery has been yet offered to our mountain-loving world, as in this exhibition of M. Loppé's work.

M. C. O'CONNOR MORRIS.

A PIC-NIC IN LONDON.

BY MOORFIELDS DAISY BROS.

THE FIRST LOAD.

"Now, then! how much longer do you girls intend to keep us waiting!" exclaimed Mr. Jemmy Sparrow, standing up on the box of his uncle's old barouche, and flourishing his whip at the second-floor windows of one of the handsome houses in Harley Street. Over the brass rim of the muslin blinds of each of those windows a bewitching lacy-floral scrap of a bonnet, with a laughing face underneath it, appeared from time to time; first one at one window, then another at the next window, then one at each; and then they vanished. There was a further interval with no signs.

"Will those last finishing touches *never* come to an end?" ejaculated Mr. Jemmy, as he gave his lash a twirl in the air, and plumped down upon the box-seat so heavily that he made the barouche leap up behind, like a boat when a sudden wave skeels under her stern.

"Hillo!" shouted his uncle Mathew, who had resigned himself to a doze in one corner, like an old stager who knew what young girls are capable of; "Hillo! I say, do you want to break my springs, Jemmy—confound you! The girls will be here directly."

"Will they?" said Mr. Jemmy; "doesn't look like it!"

Mr. Mathew Streete Sparrow, the stoutish, middle-aged gentleman in the buttoned-up drab great-coat and drab wide-awake, who was leaning back in one corner of "a sort of not-of-the-newest" family carriage, was an old bachelor of independent means, derived from a good business as a corn-factor, well known for many years on the Corn Exchange. But he had lately retired and invested his money in houses, situated in what he regarded as the most picturesque parts of London. The impatient gentleman on the box was Mr. James Streete Sparrow, his nephew, the proprietor of a nice business in the shape of a handsome pottery warehouse, connected with a factory in Stourbridge. He was also the heir to his uncle's estates in Paddington Green and Primrose Hill—the most picturesque parts of London, as previously observed. He was very fashionably dressed as to the cut of his clothes, but they were all put on and worn so carelessly that he presented a most untidy, not to say loose appearance. He would have been handsome but that his nose was rather too large, and one eye much damaged from a fight he had at school, from the

effects of which his face in other respects also had never recovered. But he was very "popular" with all his male friends, and yet more so with the fair sex; very brusque, but of a truly kind and generous nature; rather fond of wine; very fond of horses, an indifferent-good horseman, and not altogether a bad whip.

In the other corner of the barouche sat a lady of some forty years of age, with a most pleasing countenance of that kind which seems to possess a latent or inward smile derived from habitual goodness of the human heart. She was fair, and handsome, and sat folded up in a lavender silk mantle, without the remotest sign of impatience. This was Mrs. Silverley, widow of Major Silverley; and one of the laughing faces in the bewitching scrap of a bonnet that just now looked over the blind at Mr. Jemmy Sparrow, was her only daughter, aged eighteen. And a very charming production of that number of summers' and winters' growth, she certainly was. This was Mrs. Silverley's house. The other pair of eyes that had beamed down upon Mr. Jemmy, belonged to Miss Glasscut, a bright, spirited girl who had been the schoolfellow of Miss Silverley, and was now on a visit there.

The door of the house was suddenly opened. "At last!" said Mr. Jemmy. The door remained open. A servant stepped forth, and stood ready to attend upon the young ladies. But he was called in hastily, and the wind slammed to the door. "See there now!" ejaculated Mr. Jemmy, "they've forgotten something! Ran upstairs again!—I heard them!"

While matters were in this state, there stepped up to the side of the carriage a very precisely-dressed young gentleman, of most grave and staid demeanour. He had small dark eyes, half-closed, in one of which he wore a smoke-tinted eye-glass. He had a nose finely turned up at the tip, and a small, pointed chin. He raised a very small, very low-crowned, and very tight fashionable hat, and saluted Mr. Mathew Streete Sparrow and Mrs. Silverley, in the barouche, by saying in a drawling, not affected, but rather solemn tone, "Madam, good morning!—Sir, the same to you," and "Ah, Jemmy!" to his friend on the box. This was young Mr. Glasscut, clerk in a London bank, with a fair salary—quite as much as he was worth—and not without "expectations" from a maiden aunt. It was his sister who was upstairs, and seemed never coming down.

At this instant, however, down came the girls, the front-door flying open, and they both flying down the steps, and up into the carriage. Mr. Glasscut mounted beside Mr. Jemmy on the box. The whip slashed the air overhead, and away they went!

Whither? To a Pic-nic in London!

THE REST OF THE PARTY.

Now, be it understood that Mr. Mathew Streete Sparrow had for

some considerable time brooded over one idea, which he had picked up in Pimlico, while taking a "constitutional." His notions of the picturesque, it has already been seen, were peculiar. Not that he deceived himself about Paddington Green, or even about the Hill at Hampstead, where no living human being ever saw a primrose (hence its name, from a perversity quite common in local nomenclatures), but the thought had frequently presented itself that if any set of people happily constituted and disposed, entertained a real fancy for a Pic-nic, that delightful pastorality might easily be obtained without the proximity of a single sheep, or grazing cow, or woodland scenery;—in fact, that it might be very well managed in the suburbs, nay, in the very heart of London. All you wanted was a house with a green lawn at the back, having an old mulberry or walnut-tree, and a bit of shrubbery, enough to "hide your boundaries,"—and the thing was done—or as good as done! And he was right.

But Mr. Sparrow, though a bachelor something past his prime, was fully aware that one of the very first elements of a genuine Pic-nic consisted in the assemblage of a sufficient number of charming girls. And their ages, he considered, ought not to be too much the same, as variety was needed in all respects. He also saw at once the propriety of associating some lady of an uncertain age with himself in this design, in order to give a tolerably correct, though not too rigid a tone and character to the whole proceeding. He had therefore applied to Mrs. Silverley. That lady, after a little previous conversation with Mr. Sparrow, had agreed to share in the conduct and responsibilities of the undertaking. Mr. Jemmy Sparrow, directly his uncle mentioned the matter, very kindly and gladly offered to take the whole of the conduct and responsibilities upon himself; but Mrs. Silverley smilingly shook her head, and his uncle told him he had much better hold his tongue.

The next thing to do was to make up the party, select the place, and fix the day.

Now we have already got Mr. Mathew Streete Sparrow, and Mr. Jemmy Streete Sparrow, Mrs. and Miss Silverley, Mr. Glasscut, and his sister. The day had been fixed, and this was it.

The old barouche of Mr. Sparrow, Senr., was now on its way to Dorset Street, Regent's Park, where they expected to see a pony phaeton waiting for them, in which they were to find seated Mrs. Berry, a very pretty young widow lady; Miss Lily Robins, a ward in Chancery, aged seventeen; and Master Tommy Tiles, a bright-eyed little chap of the age of ten, about to be sent to Harrow or Eton: his father had not determined which. Having picked up the pony phaeton, the two traps were to proceed to Wimpole Street, there to join another barouche in which they hoped to discover several other persons already seated

and waiting impatiently. Both of the above places were accordingly visited, and at the latter they found the tolerably calm faces of Mr. Brightspire, the handsome young curate of B———; Lieutenant Finch of the rifles, who had a charming tenor voice, and played very badly on the guitar; Miss Townley, a most elegant girl, and Miss Euphemia, her maiden aunt, a most amiable lady, who took the greatest delight in seeing young people happy.

Our London Sparrows leading the way, the pony-phæton following, and the third barouche bringing up the rear, away they started with all the bright airs and vivacities of people who were off for the gypsies of Norwood, the deer of Epping Forest, or the Groves of Blarney. Talking merrily of hares and foxes, and rabbits and stags, they drove at once to the Regent's Park, and after making the rounds so as to pass and admire the colours and odours of the Botanical Gardens, and the sounds (and odours, too,) of the Zoological Gardens—noticing all bits of water with their ducks, and swans, and foreign birds, the happy carriages wheeled off gracefully towards the divine wood of St. John,—if our state of mind may crave pardon for the expression. Arrived at this pleasant and not too densely wooded or shaded locality, Mr. Jemmy led the rural-minded party up this Bank, and down the other, through this long Avenue, and then away along one altogether different, yet with a strange similarity, and then again up and down a Grove or a Hill, and with a graceful or noble name reminding us of historical glories. Eventually they arrived at the double gates of a most comfortable-looking house, with a front courtyard half overgrown with good-sized trees, several of which actually hung some of their branches over the wall, suggesting protecting shelter for passing travellers during a heavy shower of rain—so like the hospitalities of the old time before us.

THE LOCALITY OF THE PIC-NIC.

“A grey-headed porter who opened the gates,” was an event that we fancy we have read of before, somewhere or other, and more than once; but on the present occasion the gates were opened by the gardener, with his very pretty little daughter standing by his side in order to smile a welcome to every face that looked at her. A very countryfied sort of footman accompanied by a yet more country-bred groom now made their appearance, the latter being attired in a clean Kentish haymaker's smock-frock. The carriages drove in at one gate—“set down” at the hall door—and then making a semi-circle, passed out at the other gate. This was the house of Mathew Streete Sparrow, Esq. Taking Mrs. Silverley on one arm, he requested that nobody would linger in the hall to look at the pair of stag's horns over the umbrella-stand, or the trout in a glass case over the clock, but follow him at once. Pairing as best they might with so little time to choose, the party all followed, and descending a few steps at

the back of the house they at once, as by enchantment, found themselves in a really beautiful English garden. Roses, geraniums, brilliant poppies, anemones, bignonias, heaps of green from laurels and other shrubs, with a fine fountain playing charmingly somewhere out of sight—perhaps into a cistern. As for the dimensions of the garden, they were quite beyond calculation, for the boundaries were hidden, as to width, by trees and trellises covered with fragrant creepers, and as to length or depth, by a handsome marquee, with a small tent at one side, a little in the rear, as a special boudoir for the ladies, and a second small tent on the other side, where ice-pails, and bottles, and jugs, and covered things, and hampers, seemed to be assembled like “lords-in-waiting,” if again we may be pardoned for too bold a simile.

The London clocks had all struck twelve—not unanimously, but each after his own faculty—when the first barouche left Harley Street; and what with one lady and another, besides the harness, and a restive pony, it was near upon a quarter to two before the three carriages fairly started for the Park, named after the late lamented George IV. before he fairly ascended the British Throne. In fact, we may say it was on the stroke of one p.m. before the missing whip of the pony-phæton’s conductor was discovered between the hinder heels of the ponies; and such was the discursive genius and skill of the leader, Mr. Jemmy Sparrow, that he managed to prolong the ante-pic-nician drive till it was nearly four p.m. as the party arrived at the tree-shadowed residence of Mr. Mathew Streete Sparrow. It was considered rather too early for an appetite worthy of the occasion, but as the curtain in front of the marquee was a little open in the middle, it was felt that what a glance suggested was not conducive to a wish for any great delay in the preliminary rustic sports.

In front of the marquee there was a lawn, “close-shaven” of course, and really of a good green hue. Judging by the parti-coloured posts and croquet-hoops stuck about, the whole space had evidently been arranged with a view to that fashionable game. The following animated conversation immediately took place.

“Who has done this?” exclaimed Mr. Jemmy, extending both arms. “Here’s a monopoly of the whole lawn. Uncle! did you order this?”

“I certainly did not,” said Mr. Mathew S. Sparrow with great composure.

“Do you approve of it, sir, may I ask?”

“If the present company do, I do;” and the worthy gentleman looked round appealingly.

Before any of the ladies or gentlemen had time to reply, Mr. Jemmy placed himself in a cricketing attitude—“Ah, if there had been room to *send* a ball, there would have been some sense in taking things for granted.”

"Oh, of course," said Mr. Glasscut; "of course we all know cricket! such 'a manly game'—that's what is always said—and that's all that *can* be said for it. Except as a fine exercise, whereby a man may destroy his hands for the exercise of any fine art."

"The fiddle, you mean, I suppose," said Mrs. Berry, wickedly keeping her countenance.

"Or the pianoforte, madam," rejoined Mr. Glasscut, drily; "and almost any other instrument."

"Except the double drum," said Lieutenant Finch.

"And the triangle too!" exclaimed the shrill voice of Master Tommy Tiles.

"Well, I don't care for any of this nonsense," retorted Mr. Jemmy; "nor for *this* either!" and he pointed scornfully to the croquet hoops. "First the toys were in arches, then in ovals, then in squares. First they were ten or twelve inches wide, then eight or nine, then seven inches, then five, and these are still less. And for the sole purpose of making the game more difficult, provoking, and dull. And at last we hear of an 'All England Croquet Club,' as if it were possible that all England could ever be so stupid."

"Come, sir," exclaimed Miss Silverley, laughing, "this won't do; some of *us* asked for this arrangement of the lawn."

"And give me leave to tell you, Mr. Jemmy," said the handsome young curate, blandly, "that the 'All England Croquet Club' have subscribed for new ground and a Challenge Cup."

"Yes, I know,—a Silver Thimble," said Mr. Jemmy, striding away.

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed all the ladies. "Mr. Jemmy has retired from further conflict!" And so he had, for the sound of drawing corks showed that he was more beneficially engaged.

THE PIC-NIC.

So Miss Silverley, Mrs. Berry, and Miss Lily Robins, Mr. Glasscut, Lieutenant Finch, and Mr. Brightspire, took unto themselves partners and mallets, and commenced what they evidently regarded as a most interesting game.

There now arrived Captain O'Brien, not long landed from Canada, escorting Miss Yellowash from Australia, and without seeking to be poetical, as when the clouds of heaven are somewhat troubled with contentious winds, so that they really find it impossible to please everybody, while the rain threatens from one quarter, and the low rumble of thunder or some unwieldy waggon sounds from another quarter, and the prospects of the traveller or the pleasure-seeker, appear on the verge of blight, if not of tempestuous spiphlication, if suddenly a golden beam breaks through the neutral tints above, disperses all the vapours, and sheds a beneficent light of pleasure over all the fields below,—even so delightful a brightness came over the

whole of this green lawn, including the head-dresses and fancy wee things of bonnets, as well as the less ornate heads of the un-fair sex, when Captain Patrick O'Brien and Miss Harebell Yellowsash broke upon the vision of the party here assembled.

"Battledore and shuttlecock behind the marquee!" shouted the captain.

"Hide-and-seek in the shrubbery!" cried Miss Yellowsash.

"Cross-stag, or kiss-in-the-ring!" exclaimed Master Tommy. "Oh, *do* let us, Mr. Sparrow."

"Anything and everything," said Mr. Sparrow, "except leap-frog, because the ladies cannot join in that game."

Upon this hint, all who were not engaged in croquet, huddled round the leaders—to wit, the Captain from Canada and the Belle from Australia, and disappeared behind the marquee, the voice of Master Tommy being still heard declaring that he couldn't make out why ladies should not play leap-frog, as he perceived they all had got pretty doll's boots and doll's trousers. But other voices, and in various tones of excitement, from laughing calls and shouts to laughing screams and gabble, soon predominated, forming a very marked contrast to the intermittent calls and sedate wooden thuds of the croquet party on the other side, and also conveying an impression of a certain degree of proximity, and that the varieties afforded by the shrubbery were not adequate to long seclusion in the game of hide-and-seek.

And now Mrs. Silverley and Miss Euphemia Townley, closely followed by Mr. Sparrow, made their appearance round the other side of the marquee, looked inquiringly into the small provision tent, and then entered the marquee. They appeared to be engaged in settling who were to sit next to each other, in the first instance,—leaving it to "natural selection" afterwards, when parties came out to sit and recline upon the lawn with, and without, chairs and cushions.

"I am now a 'Rover!'" exclaimed the merry voice of Mrs. Berry, brandishing her croquet mallet, "and I shall at once begin to croquet friends and foes."

The lady's doubly good intention, however, quickly came to an end, as in hitting another ball she also struck her boot, and was that instant "dead" and out of the contest. Meantime, the side on which the careful, skilful, and handsome young curate was playing, had nearly passed through every hoop.

"We shall win, Miss Lily!" said he, loudly—for him,—“our side must win.”

"No, no!" cried Miss Silverley.

"Ah!" ejaculated Lieutenant Finch; "how truly Routledge says that the 'excitement towards the end of the game is almost inconceivable!'"

"Quite!" exclaimed the ironical voice of Mr. Jemmy, thrusting his

head out of the store tent with a tall hock-bottle in one hand and a corkscrew in the other. What more might have transpired in the way of repartee—what final struggles for victory might have occurred—and which side won the game, was suddenly thrown into confusion, if not oblivion, by the sound of a shrill bell and a small gong from the front of the marquee (the performers on those harmonious instruments being Mr. Sparrow, Senior, and Master Tommy Tiles), followed by the laughing rush and crowding round the back of the marquee of all those who had sought their amusement in the mysterious greeneries behind—where invisible fountains were heard to play, and birds in cages almost as invisible, were declared to sing all the tunes of the last opera.

There was no table inside the marquee. This was a real Pic-nic. But there was a large white table-cloth, edged with a broad border of pink and purple flowers, worked by rural hands in Spitalfields. This table-cloth was cut in the shape of more than half a harvest-moon, in fact, it was a moon in her three quarters. In the centre was a huge brown jug, of the Toby Philpot pattern, in which stood a huge bouquet, or rather a great English old-fashioned nosegay, crammed to ungraceful profusion with all manner of bright flowers fresh from Covent Garden, and all sorts of sweet-smelling sprigs.

On each side of this nosegay were oval dishes, full of sparkling ice, and seven champagne bottles "stood attention" in front of the places allotted to Mr. Sparrow and Mrs. Silverley, while three bottles enveloped in blue tissue paper, and pretending not to be punch, stood on guard in front of this entrance. The rest of the table-cloth was crowded with plates of ham and chicken ready carved, and game, whole and in pies, and jellies and custards, and dishes of piled-up fruits, and lots of cut glass of all shapes and sizes and colours, and no end of plates, spoons, knives, forks and billycock napkins. All these things were set out upon the three-quarter-moon cloth upon the close-shaven lawn, and round it were distributed cushions, sofa-pillows, covered bolsters, carriage-rugs and shawls, for the accommodation of our metropolitan pic-nicians.

Mr. Brightspire being requested to say grace, the accomplished young curate stood, and, without a moment's pause, and without shutting his eyes, sincerely ejaculated "Thank God!"—and amidst a sudden bee-hive hum of general hilarity and business, everybody went to work—eating, drinking, laughing, and paying a profusion of unnecessary or ridiculous attentions.

Toasts of the usual kind were proposed, and drunk in the usual way, and speeches were made so perfectly adapted to the occasion, that it would be unfair, and in some respects impossible, to give them in a printed form, so much of their delightful effect depending upon elocutionary arts, and "ladies' eyes," and all that volatile essence which is lost with the moment. A song, in a very high tenor voice,

so remarkably high indeed that the notes were often a little sharp, was given by Lieutenant Finch, accompanied by himself on the guitar, with which he was acquainted only in the first and second chords of C, while he indicated all that was wanting by a graceful and well-timed wave of the right hand, so that he won the enthusiastic applause of all assembled. Mr. Sparrow, Senior, was then "drunk with all the honours,"—coupled with the name of Mr. Jemmy, whose exertions in the present festive meeting upon the greensward of St. John's Wood were beyond all praise. Mr. Sparrow returned thanks from his heart, concluding with a hope that the present "Pic-nic in London" might be only the first of many such. Mr. Jemmy also returned thanks in a neat speech; and "if it was as dry as a nut, it was quite as sweet," remarked Mrs. Berry, which brought down much applause, and not a few witty comments upon both.

But Mr. Jemmy was destined to experience another and more severe trial of his powers of endurance under banter-fire. "Absent Friends," was the toast proposed by Captain O'Brien in a speech so full of delicious broguery, humour, and kind feeling, so rife with native wit, as well as wit quite foreign to the occasion, yet somehow wrought into it by the play of fancy, that the marquee fairly shook from its topmost canvas to its lowest peg-lines with the applause of the whole company. It is impossible to give it here, as no reporter was present. Miss Yellowsash however remarked, after a singularly clever allusion to Welsh ale, and a comparison between the South Downs and the mobs of sheep on her uncle's station (no, Sir, *not* at Woolloomooloo, which is a suburb of Sydney), this smart young lady, we say, remarked that the Captain's gallant toast ought to have been coupled with the name of a dear young friend, whom she had never yet seen, but had hoped to have met on the present occasion—Miss Maggie Lloyd of (Old) South Wales.

A VERY YOUNG LADY.

Before concluding this our first "Pic-nic in London," and before the reader who has smilingly formed one of the party, has witnessed, or anticipated, the usual merry confusion of the bad packing-up of glass and crockery in boxes, and the pell-mell stowage of impracticable iron and tin utensils, knives, forks, and spoons "all in a mess," in the creaking hampers—the shying away of empty bottles, and the juvenile peltings of almond-shells and pine-apple prickly crowns—not to mention the pursuits through shrubberies to entangle deflowered bouquet-stems amidst dishevelled flying locks;—before the reader has joined us in such final festive games (some of which never took place on the present occasion), we must introduce one more young lady who will appear among the party of our next year's Metropolitan "Pic-nic." This young lady is Miss Maggie Lloyd, of Caermarthen-shire. She is a just-opening rose-bud of South Wales, who has never

yet been twenty miles beyond her native home at 'Pwyll-y-Pant, or the "Hole in a Hollow," two or three miles from the old Castle of Caerphilly. Young Mr. Glasscut had volunteered to write to her, making an invitation in the combined names of Mrs. Silverley and Mr. Mathew Streete Sparrow; but she was requested to reply to Mr. Jemmy Sparrow, as being the chief manager of this merry assemblage.

Miss Maggie Lloyd's delighted acceptance of the invitation for the Pic-nic of next summer, was made known by the following letter, which had only just been handed to Mr. Jemmy Sparrow. Having hastily glanced over it, he was shuffling it away in his breast-pocket, with so queer an expression of countenance, that almost everybody remarked it, and he was loudly and laughingly called upon to read the young lady's letter. To this Mr. Jemmy replied simply, "I shan't." Whereupon, there was a general shout, and a general call—"Read the letter!—Miss Lloyd's letter!" Mr. Jemmy again said, with provoking dryness, "I tell you, I shan't!" and he was actually turning away to see after getting the horses into his uncle's barouche for the ladies he had brought there, when Miss Silverley, Miss Glasscut, and Miss Lily Robins, fairly rushed shrieking upon him, holding his arms, while Master Tommy Tiles, got springing and clawing up his back, and twitched the letter out of his breast-pocket.

"Well!" said Mr. Jemmy, pocketing his hands, "I said I shouldn't read it, and I shan't."

"Hoo! hoo-oo-oo!" shouted all the girls, pointing their fingers at him, and all huddling and clinging together in a sort of embodied and embroidered true-lover's knot, to read it collectively.

But it was at last agreed, that as Miss Lloyd was to come on a visit to Mrs. Silverley in the first instance, the letter should be read aloud by Miss Silverley.

And this was the letter:—

A VERY YOUNG LADY'S LETTER.

"PWYLL-Y-PANT,
"CAERMARTHENSHIRE,
"SOUTH WALES.

"MY DEAR MR. JEMMY:

"I hope you will excuse my calling you 'Jemmy' as Mamma tells me it is not proper, and that I should on no account do so."

"Ha! ha! ha!" shouted all the girls.

"Order!" ejaculated Mr. Mathew Sparrow. Miss Silverley proceeded with a most laughing countenance—

"But she did not say it was *highly* improper, and so I have passed the Rubicon, being also of opinion that it will not be displeasing to you (*sensation*), as you were so very kind to me when I was a little girl of thirteen, and you came down here. I only hope Mamma will not ask to see this letter (*sensa-*

tion). She thinks so much of me at sixteen and a quarter ; much more, I am sure, than I think of myself."

"Oh, Mr. Jemmy!" tittered several of the girls.

"Order, ladies!" said Mr. Mathew Sparrow.

"Let me hasten to say how much obliged I am by the delightful invitation I have received to the 'Pic-nic in London' for next summer which your uncle and yourself are about to give, in conjunction with Mrs. Silverley, who has deputed young Mr. Glasscut to write to me for her, as she is so very very busy in arranging the hampers and things."

"There must be some mistake here," interposed Mrs. Silverley, in her sweet voice. "I never deputed Mr. Glasscut to write to Miss Lloyd."

"He volunteered," muttered Mr. Jemmy.

"Very impudent of him," said Mr. Mathew Sparrow: "proceed."

"But I was to make my reply to you, he said, as you had the management of most other matters, by the wish of your dear uncle.

"As this will be my first visit to London, you will not be surprised to hear how much my anticipations are raised by the various sketches and hints given to me by the letter of young Mr. Glasscut. So kind of him! With what delight shall I behold the violets and primroses which he informs me grow all the way down, on each side of Park Lane (*sensation*), with little intermission, during nine months of the year. (*Sensation.*) And what a perfect fairyland must it be in May Fair, where he describes the shrubberies, not only overlaid with may blossoms and clematis, but with various other blossoms during the whole time the fair lasts, and for months afterwards."

"Oh!" and shouts of laughter burst from all the company,—except the two Sparrows.

"Where is young Glasscut?" said Mr. Mathew Sparrow.

There was no response. He was not there. Miss Silverley resumed:

"Can this really be true? How very delightful! And he says something very like this, of the bursting out of flowers and shrubs in Spring Gardens (*sensation*), except, of course, in the absolute winter months; as also in Burlington Gardens, with their countless fountains and statues looking down into crystal pools (*laughter, and cries of Shame!*); in Clarence Gardens, where living sylphid forms are seen for ever glancing in the moonlight (*silence*); and in Short's Gardens and the Hop Gardens, leading, he tells me, so gracefully into the almost interminable corn and clover fields of Long Acre."

"Infamous!" ejaculated Mr. Sparrow, starting up. "Some of these places we all know well enough: but, who—*who*, I ask, can give us some account of Short's Gardens, and the graceful "Hop Gardens," for instance?"

Captain O'Brien rose. "Sir," said he, "and ladies and gentlemen, I have the honour of an accidental knowledge of these Hop Gardens. Setting aside all idea of hops—also of mops, which are much needed there—the Gardens in question bloom in Bloomsbury, or near New Street, Covent Garden. It is a narrow lane, squalid and of bad odour, where you may see great numbers of the smallest hoppers and

creepers of the rising generation, emulating ducks and pigs in a gutter. For dirt, rags, and several other more unsightly nuisances, it even surpasses the neighbour Gardens, viz., Short's."

Cries of "Shame! shame!" with half-suppressed laughter rose on all sides.

"Where is young Glasscut?" ejaculated Mr. Mathew Sparrow, looking angrily round. But the culprit not appearing, Mr. Sparrow sat down, and the reading proceeded.

"How is it that I never read of these places, or indeed heard of them before? Though I have a vague recollection of the fields of Lincoln's Inn, with their rustic turn-stiles. But topographical works are often so very imperfect—the few I have met with—and I cannot ask Mamma about these places, you know, Mr. Jemmy, because she would at once desire to see this letter I am writing to you. And that wouldn't do; now, would it?"

Several voices here murmured with ironical reproof, "Oh, Mr. Jemmy!" and "Too bad!" and "Shame!"

"It's a precious *shame* for you to read a girl's letter addressed to me!" said Mr. Jemmy, doggedly. "You wouldn't like it yourselves."

"Go on, Miss Silverley," said Mr. Mathew Sparrow, with dignity. "It was not meant to be a private letter."

"Of course it was not," ejaculated all the young ladies.

"Don't know about that," said Mr. Jemmy; "but go on if you like."

"I must not omit to make you aware that young Mr. Glasscut has told me as a great secret, that one of the first, or among the very first places where you are to give your 'Pic-nic' will be on Bethnal-Green, or on the thick grass-plots underneath some of the most richly-carved remains of the Gothic archways of Moor-Gate (*sensation*), or the more floral vicinities of Bishop's Gate, especially in that spot, designated for concentration of fragrant profusion as the Flower Pot. (*Cries of 'O shame! shame!'*) Still I think, all things considered, that I look forward with equal delight to the umbrageous and fascinating varieties of Smith-Field."

"Stop!" exclaimed Mr. Mathew Sparrow, rising. "I'll not allow such hoaxes as these to be played by young London sparks upon innocent and much younger girls in Wales! Where is Mr. Glasscut, again I demand? Where is he, Miss Glasscut? I insist upon an answer."

"I really don't know, sir. It was very, very wrong of him. I can make no other answer."

"Oh, finish the letter!" cried several voices: and Miss Silverley proceeded to the close.

"Of Smith Field, Spital Fields, and of White Chapel (*Oh! oh!*) with their soft quiet meadows and romantic narrow walks in shady places, their sweet enclosures and lovely alleys (*sensation*), not to speak of the rich forest scenery of St. John's Wood, and of Paradise Street (is it really a street?) in Marylebone. And oh! Green Arbour Court, or Alley!—delightful abode of all the Muses—the sacred Nine!" (*Loud cries of 'Shameful!—naughty Mr. Glasscut.'*)

"Now, I must stop, as I hear Mamma's step, and she might not altogether approve of my taking up so much of your time (*ahem!*), dear Mr. Jemmy (*ahem!* and *tittering*), with all these happy anticipations, most of which, and why not all, I feel quite certain will be realized, more than realized."

"Much more," muttered Mr. Jemmy—"but go on."

"No: it was a false alarm. Mamma has turned off into the garden to drive out the fowls. They are so very troublesome for this, but one doesn't like to be unkind to them, mischievous creatures as they are, especially when they have a brood of chicks popping and tweeting and flittering all around them. But I really mustn't forget Ibury Barn, with its white owls, so truthfully described by young Mr. Glasscut (*Cries of 'Abominable! infamous!'*); and Hizlingtown, with its colossal Angel (*Oh! oh!*); the Swiss Cottage, with the Ampstead Ills (so he writes, but surely this must be in the haste of the moment, they are no doubt more correctly, Ampstead Hills) in the blue distance; and Sadler's Wells, too, which he assures me are far surpassing Tunbridge Wells (*shame! shame!*); the Springs of Saratoga (that's somewhere in North America, is it not?) or the bubbling Brunnens of Nassau, which I once read of. My brain fairly dizzies with the hopeful imagination of all those things!

"I wonder what will be in the hampers? I don't care much about eating, but I do *so* want to know all I can beforehand. I hope there will be plenty of lemonade, as some days it will be very warm, even in St. John's Wood and Sadler's Wells; also cold ham and chicken are not bad. Now, you mustn't be disgusted with me, dear Mr. Jemmy, for talking of such things—"

Cries of "Oh, dear no!" "Of course he will not!" here drowned the speaker's voice.

"I tell you what," began Mr. Jemmy, with an angry voice. But it was of no use. "Why the girl's only sixteen and a few months, and here are you all trying to make out——" but his voice was drowned, and he saw it was of no use.

"Because," resumed the letter-reader, "because you know girls must talk of something, and very often we talk of the last things we are thinking of, or the least thing,—that is, of what is not at all in our real thoughts (*ahem* and *order!*) So, be sure to give my best love to Mrs. Silverley, and your uncle, dear Mr. Mathew Sparrow, also to Miss Silverley and Miss Glasscut; and believe me, with affectionate remembrances to yourself, in which I am sure Mamma will join, whenever I tell her,

"Yours sincerely,

"MAGGIE LLOYD."

THE CONCLUSION.

Here everybody began to speak at once;—indignantly, lovingly, angrily, merrily—most affectionately of dear little Maggie—most comically denunciatory of that *wicked* Mr. Glasscut, most ironically apologetic to the frowning Mr. Jemmy for having read his private-public love-letter. Love-letter?—Yes; what else could it be called?—of course it was a love-letter; and, as such, ought never to have been read aloud! And then they all burst out laughing.

The first beams of the summer moon were now beginning to show a

faint silver upon the tops of the trees of the sainted wood—to wit, of St. John—and it was time to depart. Many things belonging to Mrs. Berry, Mrs. Silverley, and Miss Euphemia, had to be taken away, but all the rest were to be left with Mr. Sparrow.

A scrambling fire of words now ensued, accompanied by appropriate action,—

“Where’s my bonnet?”

“Where’s my shawl?”

“No—not that. How chilly the air is getting!”

“Nor that—nor that—oh, dear me!”

“How shall we ever?—Shall we *really* ever? No—never!”

“*Euch!* oo! for shame, sir!”

“Why?—what was it? What did he do?”

“Who?—what did somebody—where—when—*now*?”

“It *was* you—you know it was!—Yes, he did, dear.”

“Ha! ha! ha!—did he, indeed! ha! ha! ha!”

“But I assure you, dear Miss——”

“Don’t dear me—it was very rude of you!”

“I’m sure I beg ten thousand——”

“Ha! there’s my bonnet!”

“You know very well what——. Yes, he did!”

“Order, I say! decorum, young gentleman!”

“I give you my sacred word, Mr. Sparrow, I only kissed the chignon!”

“Ha! ha! ha! his sacred word!”

“Now, are we all ready?”

“No!—no!—no! we give our sacred words!”

“Be steady, young gentlemen, I must repeat!”

“You’ll come in our carriage!—*do* come in our carriage! we’ll make such nice room!”

“O! O!—did you hear *that*?”

“Order, gentlemen. I must entreat you to be very polite to the ladies!”

“There will be room in our——, plenty.”

“Impossible, my dear!”

“Is it, aunt?—suppose we just see?”

“Ha! ha! ha!—the sacred chignon!—let’s just see.”

“Now are we all ready, again I ask?”

“All! all! all! ha! ha! ha!”

Boxes, cases, cloaks, rugs, wrappers, were all collected; horses, and ponies were all announced as ready; phaetons and barouches were filled by their respective parties, and nags were mounted. This is rendered in the florid style, to give the effect of numbers. Off they all trooped, most talkative, most merrily,—and so ended our first Picnic in London—the first of the kind “on record,” as here above faithfully portrayed by our friends the Daisies (Brothers) of Moorfields.

EURIPIDES IN MODERN ENGLISH.—BROWNING'S BALAUSTION.

SECOND PART.

WE were compelled by want of space to defer the consideration of our chosen specimen of the third method of representing Euripides to the English reader: we proceed to examine it now. It is, as our readers will remember, that version of his *Alcestis* which Browning has incorporated with the poem which he has been pleased to designate *Balaustion's Adventure*.

The appearance of the author of *The Ring and the Book* as a translator, and a very correct translator too, of Euripides was occasioned by Mr. Leighton's *Fight of Hercules with Death for the Soul of Alcestis*. A noble lady requested him to make her a version of the tragedy from which that picture derived its subject; while a dearer form beckoned assenting from the spirit-land, pointing on the scroll which could not die with her to her own verses in praise of Euripides. The picture will be fresh in the recollection of many of our readers. In Browning's words—

There lies Alcestis dead, beneath the sun
She longed to look her last upon, beside
The sea which somehow tempts the life in us
To come trip over its wide waste of waves,
And try escape from earth, and fleet as free.
Behind the body, I suppose there bends
Old Pheres in his hoary impotence,
And women waiters in a corner crouch,
Close each to other, agonizing all,
As fastened, in fear's rhythmic sympathy,
To two contending opposite. There strains
The might o' the hero 'gainst his more than match,
Death, dreadful not in thew and bone, but like
The envenomed substance that exudes some dew,
Whereby the merely honest flesh and blood
Will fester up and run to ruin straight,
Ere they can close with, clasp, and overcome
The poisonous impalpability
That simulates a form beneath the flow
Of those grey garments.

That strong wrestler is Hercules: the scene which the artist portrays is described, but not represented, in the drama which Euripides founded on the well-known story of *Alcestis*. In it the young wife of Admetus the Thessalian king consents to die in her husband's place; Apollo having obtained for him the boon of a prolonged existence if

he can persuade anyone to suffer the death which is his due. In a version of the story, recently revived by Mr. Palgrave, which also finds a place in Mr. Browning's epilogue, it is Proserpine herself who, touched by the self-devotion of Alcestis, restores her to her husband and children. But according to Euripides, her life is won back by Hercules after a tremendous struggle with *Death* himself. The beginning of his play is taken up by the representation of his heroine's death, with every circumstance attendant on it which can stir the beholder's pity; the middle, by the accidental intrusion of Hercules into the house of mourning, favoured by the hospitable deceit of Admetus; while the conclusion depicts his restoration of Alcestis to her husband as the reward of the king's generous concealment of his own woe to do honour to his mighty guest.

In no play does Euripides show himself more worthy of the character which we have ascribed to him as the Hellenic Tennyson, than in his *Alcestis*. His heroine stands before us in unapproachable dignity; the very embodiment of conjugal and maternal love. The pathetic tenderness of her dying moments thrills the spectator's soul with compassion, as her self-devotion rouses his highest admiration; while the contrast presented between the heroism of Hercules, confiding in his own strong arm, and that of the gentle Alcestis, strong in the midst of weakness with a courage born of love, is decidedly to the advantage of the woman. But this moral grandeur is attained by a process which pitifully dwarfs her husband's form. Precisely to the extent by which her spiritual stature exceeds the common standard of humanity does his fall below it. Probably no man ever read the *Alcestis* without a strong feeling of impatience and growing anger at the husband's unmanliness, who weeps over his dying wife and carries her forth, with bitter tears, to burial, but yet never rescinds his acceptance of her too generous offer—never asserts his right to save her from death by dying himself. When, therefore, the play concludes by leaving Admetus in safe possession alike of the life which he grasped so selfishly and of the noble woman whom he prized so much below her real value, the spectator's sense of what is due to poetic justice remains unsatisfied. Nor can he frame a pleasant image to himself of the restored wife's new life, when the three days' silence, by which the poet adjourns the difficult first greeting, shall be over. Who feels quite sure what a Sixth Act of Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale* might have contained? Yet Hermione has only died in figure, not in reality; and the penance of Leontes has lasted, not for one brief day, but for sixteen years! This weak point in an otherwise most beautiful story (brought into stronger relief by the realistic treatment of Euripides) occasions the chief defect of the tragedy in an artistic point of view; the collapse of interest throughout its middle part. The spectator's eager attention dies and revives with Alcestis herself; where *she* is absent it languishes. The sorrow of Admetus, beautifully painted as it is, affects

him mainly as a tribute due, and more than due, to her memory ; while the widower's undignified wrangle with his aged father, as he reproaches him with the selfishness which he has himself copied but too faithfully, arouses displeasure and disgust.

Yet in spite of these imperfections, the *Alcestis* is one of the most delightful of the plays of Euripides, from its truth to nature, its unrivalled pathos, and the high strain of poetry to which it rises in its lyric passages.

Let us see what Mr. Browning has done with the grand old story ; confident as we open his book that the cowardice of Admetus will meet with no quarter from the author of " *Prospice* ; " the antique ideal of wifehood be sure of a fitting interpretation from the writer of the noble dedication of " *Men and Women*." First of all, then, we glance at the charming introduction ; that tale so full of life and spirit of the Rhodian ship which the pirate bark chased into the harbour of Syracuse, the year after the sad fate of Nicias and his unfortunate expedition ; the ship which was doomed to instant expulsion thence on account of its crew's Athenian sympathies, but saved by that love of the Sicilian Greeks for the verse of Euripides, which, as history tells us, proved the deliverance of many of his captive countrymen. A young girl on board, *Balaustion* (*Pomegranate-Flower*), offers to recite one of the poet's finest dramas before the assembled populace of the city ; and gains a kind reception for her companions, and applause and reward for herself, by repeating the *Alcestis* on the steps of the Temple of Hercules. Months after, safe at Athens, on the eve of her own marriage, she tells her adventure to four chosen friends, and rehearses to them the tragedy once more, interspersed with comments of her own. The play, thus felicitously introduced, follows ; its iambics very faithfully rendered in that peculiar diction which a large section of the English public now knows intimately as the Browningsque, a species of blank verse which stands related to that of our standard poets, much as does the style of Mr. Carlyle to that of our classic prose-writers ; warmly coloured, picturesque, and expressive, but defective in that dignity and repose which the interpreter of Hellenic art should possess. The lyric portion of the drama is unhappily translated in the same metre as its dialogue ; sometimes, indeed, not translated at all, but merely indicated by a brief summary of its sense. Thus one half of the play, and that half the most beautiful, is lost to us as far as form goes ; a loss which nothing can compensate, as every Greek scholar will bear witness. On the other hand, we have the curious and interesting feature of Mr. Browning's own comments, with the valuable help they give towards entering into the spirit of the tragedy. The shrewdness of these comments contrasts indeed rather strangely with the youth and inexperience of their supposed speaker. Like the *Mephistopheles* of the second " *Faust*," Browning is better fitted to correspond with romantic than with classic spectres ; more " a

creature of the Northern clime" than of the sunny south. And though he has here assumed a more pleasing shape than that of the hideous Phorceyad, a mask carefully modelled after the young Rhodian's classic beauty, yet the tones of the well-known voice betray the actor in a moment. The girl is far too wise for her years; nay, she knows some things which were not known even to the wisest of her contemporaries; she is decidedly more a "Teuton" than an antique Greek: the attempted impersonation fails, Balaustion disappears, and her poet stands revealed as he casts off her encumbering draperies. So recognized, it is still true that after the wont of interpreters he imports by his comments a meaning, at times, into his author, which we have much ado to find there without his assistance; under his skilful handling Hercules rises some cubits in moral stature, and Admetus ripens into a nobleness of nature which we rather desire than expect in him. But we owe to Browning the deepening of many a touch which the careless reader might have overlooked; the bringing out the full significance of such moral teaching as the play really contains. Nothing, for instance, can be better than his acute remarks on the repulsive dialogue between Admetus and his father, Pheres, after the death of Alcestis.

"Like hates like:

Accordingly Admetus,—full i' the face
Of Pheres, his true father, outward shape
And inward fashion, body matching soul,—
Saw just himself when years should do their work
And reinforce the selfishness inside,
Until it pushed the last disguise away:
As when the liquid metal cools i' the mould,
Stands forth a statue: bloodless, hard, cold bronze.
So in old Pheres, young Admetus showed,
Pushed to completion: and a shudder ran,
And his repugnance soon had vent in speech."

How fine too is his account of death's power to dispel illusions; of the sword which has for office to cut the soul off

"from something in this world which hides

Truth, and hides falsehood, and so lets us live,"

as exemplified in the absence of tender fictions from Alcestis' last farewell. Then, how well he fills for us the blanks of the missing stage directions; how real under his guidance becomes to us the startling effect of the voice of Hercules as he enters the group of mourners waiting outside, while the corpse of Alcestis is being prepared for burial within the palace.

"Every touch

O' the garland on those temples, tenderest
Disposure of each arm along its side
Came putting out what warmth i' the world was left."

When

*"Sudden into the midst of sorrow leapt,
Along with the gay cheer of that great voice,*

Hope, joy, salvation : Hercules was here !
 Himself o' the threshold, sent his voice on first
 To herald all that human and divine
 I' the weary, happy face of him,—half god,
 Half man,—which made the god-part god the more."

What a picture, too, he paints for us of the funeral procession, as it were in two compartments : the one, visible only to the mental eye, of Death marching at the head

"O' the mourners—one hand pointing out their path,
 With the long pale terrific sword we saw,
 The other leading, with grim tender grace,
 Alcestis quieted and consecrate ;"

the lower compartment displaying

"Alcestis, calmly crowned,
 Carried aloft, in decency and state,
 To the last burial-place and burning-pile !"

Such are some of the most noticeable passages in which the translator comes forward in his own person to illustrate or explain. It is now time to give specimens of his actual version itself. Our first shall be a portion of the handmaid's pathetic description of her mistress's deportment on the fatal morning. The Chorus of assembled friends (after Death broke away from Apollo, and rushed into the doomed house) wait outside for tidings. The weeping attendant depicts the little children clinging to their mother's robe, and receiving her last kisses ; the sorrowing servants bidding their kind mistress farewell, after she has stood, robed and crowned, in her pale loveliness to make her last prayer to the gods of the living ; when she

"stood before the hearth, and prayed :

'Mistress, because I now depart the world,
 Falling before thee the last time, I ask—
 Be mother to my orphans ! wed the one
 To a kind wife, and make the other's mate
 Some princely person : nor, as I who bore
 My children perish, suffer that they too
 Die all untimely, but live, happy pair,
 Their full glad life out in the fatherland !'
 And every altar through Admetus' house
 She visited and crowned and prayed before,

Without a tear, without a groan.

This done,—

Reaching her chamber, falling on her bed,
 There, truly, burst she into tears and spoke :
 'O bride-bed, where I loosened from my life
 Virginity for that same husband's sake
 Because of whom I die now—fare thee well !
 Since nowise do I hate thee : me alone
 Hast thou destroy'd ; for, shrinking to betray
 Thee and my spouse, I die ; but thee, O bed,
 Some other woman shall possess as wife—
 Truer, no ! but of better fortune, say !'

It is impossible not to admire the art with which Euripides, both by the pathetic speech, of which these lines form part, and by all that precedes it, excites the spectator's desire to the utmost height to behold the dying queen. He can hardly restrain his impatience, after the handmaid has announced her mistress's wish to see the light of day once more outside the palace, till, accompanied by her mourning husband and children, and heralded by snatches of choric prayer and song, Alcestis is carried upon the stage (in Browning's words),—

"The consecrated lady, borne to look
Her last—and let the living look their last—
She at the sun, we at Alcestis."

The death-scene which follows (unsurpassed in pathos by any other of Euripides, unless by the brief passage, already quoted, at the close of his *Hippolytus*) divides itself, in the original, into two parts. The first and shorter represents by its varied lyric movement, now retarded, now hurried, as sorrow presses on the heart or fear disturbs it, the strange bewildering excitement of Alcestis at the approach of death, echoed, as it is, by the husband in fainter tones, through sympathy with her. Here the changeful metre of the Greek is essential; and the unchanged blank verse of the version before us cannot adequately represent it. It is well fitted, on the other hand, to the second and longer division of the scene. For there a calm has succeeded to the tempest in the dying woman's mind. Not repenting of her generous offer, yet unable to prevent his acceptance of it from lowering Admetus in her esteem, she rouses herself to exact securities from him for her children's welfare; and then, having spent her last energies in their behalf, bids them farewell and dies. Persuaded that the effect of the contrast between this scene's opening and conclusion can only be felt through adherence to its form, we subjoin its lyrical commencement by a different hand, resuming Browning's version where the iambics of the original begin.

ALCESTIS.

[O Sun ! O light of day !
Swift clouds of heaven, in circling course that speed !

ADMETUS.

That Sun sees thee, sees me—both in sore need—
We sinned not to make Death tear thee away.

ALCESTIS.

Earth ! roof of this my home !
Native Iolkos ! palace where I wed !

ADMETUS.

Give all not up, dear Sufferer ! lift thine head ;
Pray that some pity may the gods o'ercome.

ALCESTIS.

I see, I see the two-oared Bark ;
 The dead men's Ferryer stern,
 Charon, his hand upon his pole, even now
 Calls to me with bent brow :
 " Why tarry ? quick ! delay not my return ! "

Thus, thus, he hurries me down to those waters dark.

ADMETUS.

Alas ! that voyage drowns me with bitterness :
 Ill-fated that I am ! in sorrows measureless !

ALCESTIS.

They lead, they lead me, seest thou not ?
 Into the dead's wide hall :
 With eyes dark-gleaming, black-browed, strong of wing,
 Glares Hades, gloomy king ;
 What dost thou ? let me go, vain now recall :
 Dread is the road I yet must traverse,—sad my lot.

ADMETUS.

Sad thy lot—sad for all thy friends ; but more
 For me and for thy babes who share this anguish sore.

ALCESTIS.

Let me go, let me go !
 Lay me down ; for my limbs fail me fast !
 I draw nigh to the kingdom below ;
 For a dark night at last
 Dims mine eyes ; see its shade o'er me cast.
 Children, my children, ye
 Have now no mother ; her fond cares are o'er.
 Ah ! may ye joyful see
 That light which none can to her eyes restore.]

Admetus rejoins with more weak lamentations ; more vain entreaties to his wife not to forsake her children and the husband who solemnly assures her that his life and death are bound up in hers. " Which brought out truth to judgment," in the words of the commentator ; who sees Alcestis, by a supreme effort of will, wave away from before her dying eyes the phantom form of Charon, and all the pageantry of Hades, to fix them " on the protesting man " whom she is about to address with words of unflattering truth. We resume Browning's version.

ALCESTIS.

Admetus,—how things go with me thou seest,—
 I wish to tell thee, ere I die, what things
 I will should follow. I—to honour thee,
 Secure for thee, by my own soul's exchange,
 Continued looking on the daylight here—
 Die for thee—yet, if so I pleased, might live,
 Nay, wed what man of Thessaly I would,
 And dwell i' the dome * with pomp and queenliness.

* A translation much nearer to the sound than to the sense of δῶμα.

I would not, would not live bereft of thee.

Do me in turn a favour,—favour, since
Certainly I shall never claim my due,
For nothing is more precious than a life.

She then implores her husband never to give their children a step-mother, whose yoke, hard on the boy, might press doubly on the girl, to whom she says regretfully—

For neither shall thy mother watch thee wed,
Nor hearten thee in childbirth, standing by
Just when a mother's presence helps the most !
No, for I have to die : and this my ill
Comes to me, nor to-morrow, no, nor yet
The third day of the month, but now, even now,
I shall be reckoned among those no more.

Admetus answers with tender assurances that he will fulfil all her wishes. Still he never insists on taking her place in the grave, from which he yet declares that he would do or suffer anything to rescue her. Her only reply to his protestations is to call her children to witness them ; and then, on their faith, to entrust them to him.

ALCESTIS.

Then, for such promise of accomplishment,
Take from my hand these children !

ADMETUS.

Thus I take—
Dear gift from the dear hand !

ALCESTIS.

Do thou become
Mother, now, to these children in my place !

ADMETUS.

Great the necessity I should be so,
At least, to these bereaved of thee !

ALCESTIS.

Child—child !
Just when I needed most to live, below
Am I departing from you both !

ADMETUS.

Ah me !
And what shall I do, then, left lonely thus ?

ALCESTIS.

Time will appease thee : who is dead is nought.

ADMETUS.

Take me with thee—take,* by the Gods below.

ALCESTIS.

We are sufficient—we who die for thee.

ADMETUS.

O Powers, ye widow me of what a wife !

ALCESTIS.

And truly the dimmed eye draws earthward now !

ADMETUS.

Wife, if thou leav'st me, I am lost indeed !

ALCESTIS.

She once was—now is nothing, thou may'st say.

ADMETUS.

Raise thy face, nor forsake thy children thus !

ALCESTIS.

Ah, willingly indeed I leave them not !
But—fare ye well, my children ! †

Then the boy calls with loud laments on the dead mother who can answer her “little nestling's” cry no more : Admetus lifts up his head as one stunned to pronounce his decree for his subjects' solemn mourning ; and the scene closes by the following choric ode in praise of the dead, which we offer in a lyric form for our readers' comparison with Mr. Browning's iambics :—

[CHORUS.

1st Strophe.

Daughter of Pelias ! go

To Hades' dwelling with good auguries,

Where thou must live in sunless house below

Let Hades, dark-haired god, let him the steersman know,

Old Escort of the dead,

The dreaded oar that plies,

That never till this day o'er Acheron sped

A woman good as thou, his boat's new freight and prize.

1st Antistrophe.

Thee shall the minstrels sing

Oft to the seven-stringed notes of mountain lyre ;

Oft too their song, thy praises echoing,

* This is the utmost pitch to which the heroism of Admetus rises during his wife's lifetime. There is a chilling dignity in her response.

†

“Against my will I say it, but I must :

Farewell, my children,”

would perhaps be a little nearer to the original “ὅ δὲ θεὸς ἐκοῦσα γ', ἀλλὰ χαίρει',
ὦ τέκνα ;” but it is not easy to give its full force.

To flute-notes sad shall rise in Sparta, heralding
 (Flooding the sky all night)
 Carneian moon's soft fire.
 Oft in Athene's city, rich and bright,—
 Such theme thou leav'st, to bards a praise and a desire.

2nd Strophe.

Would that in me it lay,
 Thee forth from Hades' hall,
 To guide to light of day
 (Cocytus passed) and call
 Charon to row another way !
 For thou, alone of women, lady dear !
 Didst not fear
 Thy husband's life with thine own life to buy :
 Therefore upon thee lightly lie
 The earth. And if that husband wed
 Afresh, my hatred light upon his head,
 And these thine orphans' enmity.

2nd Antistrophe.

His mother's heart could shun
 The grave, nor in it hide
 To help her child undone ;
 His old sire, terrified,
 Dared not redeem from death his son :
 They clung to life despite their hoary hair ;
 Thou didst dare,
 In blooming youth, with life's sweet breath to part
 For husband's sake. Ah ! may my heart
 Gain such a wife ; a treasure found
 How rarely ! then shall days with bliss be crowned
 And never bring me sorrow's smart.]

We must pass over several scenes which contain the various incidents which precede and follow the funeral : the inopportune arrival of Hercules (dismissed to feast in the guest-chamber with closed doors by the assurance of Admetus that he is about to bury only a stranger denizen of his home) ; the appearance of the king's old father, Pheres, with ornaments for the dead, and their rejection by Admetus, who is foolish enough to upbraid his father for his refusal to die in his stead (as though selfishness grew weaker instead of stronger by exercise, and as though he had himself purchased the right to reprove it in another by his own disinterested conduct) ; and, lastly, the discovery to Hercules of the King's hospitable deception by the attendant, whose indignation at hearing song and laughter in the desolate house is a fine natural touch, one further witness to the goodness of his dead lady, and should not have been attributed by our commentator to the petty spite which he pictures as

“ Somewhat soothed,
 However, that he had adroitly dashed
 The mirth of the great creature ; oh, he marked

The movement of the mouth, how lip pressed lip,
 And all the joy and wonder of the wine
 Withered away, like fire from off a brand
 The wind blows over—beacon though it be,
 Whose merry ardour only meant to make
 Somebody all the better for its blaze,
 And save lost people in the dark—quenched now !”

After Hercules has resolved on challenging Death, and departed to seek his terrible adversary, the mourners return to the desolated palace, as Browning says well and simply—

“ In came the mourners from the funeral,
 One after one ; until we hoped the last
 Would be Alcestis, and so end our dream.
 Could they have really left Alcestis lone
 I’ the way-side sepulchre ! Home, all save she !”

And now Admetus realises at last his loss in all its hopelessness :—

“ Now he was made aware how dear is death,
 How loveable the dead are, how the heart
 Yearns in us to go hide where they repose,
 When we find sunbeams do no good to see
 Nor earth rests rightly where our footsteps fall.”

Or, in language closer to his speech in Euripides, though perhaps scarcely so beautiful as Browning’s, he exclaims as he pauses on his threshold :—

[Sad my approach ! sad the sight
 Of my widowed abode !
 Woe, woe ! I walk wildered in night,
 Nor to death find the road.
 My mother for evil fate bore me,
 I envy the dead ;
 My love, my desire, hastes before me
 Their dim halls to tread.
 I hate to behold the sun’s ray,
 To set foot on the ground,
 Since Death that dear pledge from mine arms rent away
 And in Hades fast bound.]

The Chorus offer commonplace consolations like those of Hamlet’s mother. They tell Admetus that his grief cannot profit the dead ; not seeing that they add a sting to it by reminding him of the fact. He is not the first man who has lost a good wife, they say ; and Admetus is exasperated like Hamlet at their thinking a great calamity made less by its being shared by many. He wails forth—

[Long is our mourning, long is our grief
 For the loved whom the earth has hid :
 I, in her tomb, would have found relief,
 Cast myself in ; why did ye forbid ?

Then had I laid me in death beside
 The best of women ; and two for one,
 Two faithful souls should across the tide
 Of waters dark have to Hades gone.]

Amid more well-meaning but wearisome exhortations Admetus goes on to enter his house, but starts back shuddering at the ghosts of happier days which meet him at the door :—

[Oh house fair and great !
 How shall I enter thee ? still call thee home ?
 Dwell here with changed fate ?
 Ah ! not as I came once, I come ;—
 Then I walked through this gate,
 Torch-lit by the Pelian pine,
 Sounding glad marriage-song,
 My loved wife's hand in mine ;
 While loud shouted the throng
 My bride's name and mine with glad cries,
 The high-born, nobly wed :—
 — Now for nuptial hymns wallings sad rise ;
 Now for white robes fair spread
 Veiled mourners, black-stoled, meet mine eyes
 And conduct me within to my desolate bed.]

The Chorus make another inefficient response, and then Admetus sums up his loss and gain, and delivers deliberate judgment against his own choice. For now has come the time, in the words of the commentator—

“ When, the last of bubbles broke,
 The latest circlet widened all away
 And left a placid level, that upswam
 To the surface the drowned truth in dreadful change.”

Now he declares in the speech which in the version before us commences—

“ Friends, I account the fortune of my wife
 Happier than mine, though it seem otherwise :
 For her indeed no grief will ever touch,
 And she from many a labour pauses* now,
 Renowned one,”—

that he has nothing to expect henceforth but misery at home and disgrace abroad ; when his enemies shall point at him as a coward, and say of him,

“ ‘ He hates his parents for declining death,
 Just as if he himself would gladly die ! ’ ”

The lowest depth of despondency is now reached. Admetus, though,

* Another instance of sound preferred to sense. To pause in English is to cease for a while, and then recommence. In Greek it is to leave off altogether ; which should have been expressed here by a different word.

pace Browning, still selfish in his sorrow, has learned that even in a selfish point of view a man may do worse for himself than consent to die. The Chorus stand at last hopeless of giving comfort, paralysed by a sense of the irresistible might of Fate; and their song (a lyric version of which we subjoin) plants, as it were, the tombstone firmly on the grave of the lost Alcestis, bearing her fair effigy, with an inscription in her praise, that the spectator, partaking for a while in their acquiescence in an evil now past remedy, may see the unexpected joy of the final scene in stronger relief from the dark background on which it rises.

[CHORUS.

1st Strophic.

I have sought truth in song,
 Soared upward, searched out lore
 Of many a sage; but found
 No force so strong
 That dread Necessity must bend before.
 Nor grows there herb on ground,
 In Orphic strain renowned,
 Or Phœbus' gift to Asclepiad (healing sore
 Pains of man's state) that can give aid one whit the more.

1st Antistrophic.

She only hath no shrine,
 Her statue none draws near;
 No sacrifice she heeds.
 Lady divine,
 Lay not upon me load more hard to bear
 Than I have borne! Zeus needs
 Thee when to act proceeds
 His will. Like reeds thou bendest sword or spear;
 Thy harsh resolve stands firm, it knows nor shame nor fear.

2nd Strophic.

Thee too hath bound with hands that none can flee, O King!
 The goddess. Bear thy woe; thou canst not bring
 The dead by tears to earth again.
 Children of gods lie withering
 And wasting in death's chain.
 Dear was she while with us in life,
 Dear yet among the dead;
 For, of all noble women, thou didst wed
 The noblest for thy wife.

2nd Antistrophic.

Nor reckon thou thy lost wife's heaped mound for a tomb,
 Nay, but a shrine, like gods' who save from doom;
 Turning to which the travellers pray.
 Such up the winding path shall come,
 And, coming, this shall say:
 "She for her husband bravely died,
 Now among gods is blest;

Hail, lady ! send to us from out thy rest
Help, and good fortune's tide."]

The last line has hardly died away when Hercules appears, leading a veiled woman, whom he announces as the prize newly won by him in a wrestling match, and bids Admetus keep safe for him until he returns from Thrace. The king starts back with horror, and implores his friend to seek an asylum for the stranger elsewhere : then, a resemblance startling him, he says—

" But thou,—O woman, whosoe'er thou art,—
Know, thou hast all the form, art like as like
Alcestis, in the bodily shape ! Ah me !
Take—by the gods—this woman from my sight,
Lest thou undo me, the undone before !
Since I seem—seeing her—as if I saw
My own wife ! And confusions cloud my heart,
And from my eyes the springs break forth ! Ah, me
Unhappy—how I taste for the first time
My misery in all its bitterness ! "

Hercules insists : this sorrow will pass away, a new wife will some day dispel it. Then Alcestis trembles with joy beneath her veil, as she hears her husband say—

" When I betray her, though she is no more—
May I die ! "

Her friendly champion wrings a reluctant consent from Admetus, makes him take the hand from which he shrinks as from a treason, and then at last reveals to him the face of Alcestis. Mr. Leighton ought to complete his work by painting for us that recognition of the dead, once more alive, by the husband for whom she died. We know how it must have haunted the bereaved Milton's slumbers, since he woke from them to write—

" Methought I saw my late espoused saint
Brought to me like Alcestis from the grave,
Whom Jove's great son to her glad husband gave,
Rescued from death by force, though pale and faint."

Euripides leaves it to the spectator's imagination. Admetus is commonplace in his joy as before in his sorrow, in his gratitude to Hercules as before in his selfishness ; and Alcestis stands mute before him. No tender, grave accents, like those of the restored Hermione in the last scene of the *Winter's Tale*, tremble on her lips. Some true instinct taught her poet (heathen though he was) the same reserve which forbade the inspired penman to report to us the words of the risen Lazarus ; and Admetus is significantly bidden to await the vanishing of her consecration to the lower gods, and to expect to hear her voice on the third day. Browning's description (all but one needlessly grotesque word) comes gracefully to aid the dialogue :

"There is no telling how the hero *twitched*
 The veil off : and there stood, with such fixed eyes
 And such slow smile, Alcestis' silent self !
 It was the crowning grace of that great heart
 To keep back joy ; procrastinate the truth
 Until the wife, who had made proof and found
 The husband wanting, might essay once more,
 Hear, see, and feel him renovated now—
 Able to do, now, all herself had done,
 Risen to the height of her : so, hand in hand,
 The two might go together, live and die."

We confess that these three last lines seem to us a most bold flight of the imagination ; and we appeal to all the readers of the *Alcestis*, whether in the Greek or in the able version before us, to say whether they can be justified from the dialogue. We wish, we greatly wish, that we could believe in this sudden ascent of King Admetus in the moral scale. But, considering that verbal protestations of love for his wife were things in which he was never wanting in his worst moments, we know not how the most vehement declarations against a second marriage (uttered, too, on the very day of her funeral) can be evidence of a decisive change of character, remaining, as they perforce must, untested. We should have thought that, with Hercules, deeds would always have found more favour than words ; and if he, as Browning tells us, on hearing Admetus promise to die rather than betray his dead wife,

"Knew his friend,
 Planted firm foot, now, on the loathly thing
 That was Admetus late ! would die, he *knew*
 Ere let the reptile raise its crest again,"

we can only say that he must have *known* it by intuition, having but slender evidence to produce for the fact.

But in truth, alike in the modern reader's contempt for the character of Admetus, and in Browning's efforts to restore him to our esteem, we see the effects of judging the productions of one age by the moral standard of another. We despise the man for the tenacity of grasp with which he clung to life ; because we are familiar with the conception of this present life as the short preface to a book of whose pages there shall be no end. Euripides considered it as the whole of man's existence in any desirable state. To his mind, therefore, his hero was, if in some degree blameworthy, yet very excusable : and he seems to have felt secure of the pity of his audience for the man who to preserve to his children their father, to his subjects their monarch, accepted the sacrifice of a life inferior in value to his own to the world in general, though to his own soul inestimably precious.

In the epilogue to *Balaustion* we are offered a more heroic, but less life-like, Admetus. The Rhodian girl is there made to shadow forth a new drama on the same story, in which the Thessalian king

has learned from Apollo to try to revive the golden age by a reign of strict justice and pure benevolence. The warning that he shall die and not live grieves him most for the sake of others ; but also it seems to him, as to Arnold's Mycerinus, hard to die just when he is a blessing to all around him, while harsh and unjust rulers live on. Then Alcestis, the partner of all his designs, insists on dying in his stead, in order that he may have time to execute them. Apollo indeed knows (being wiser than mortals) that her sacrifice is not really needed, since "No fruit man's life can bear will fade" without leaving a seed whence shall spring yet better fruit in time to come ; but still he permits it. Admetus at first rejects his wife's offer :

"Let purposes of Zeus fulfil themselves,
If not through me, then through some other man !
Still, in myself he had a purpose too,
Inalienably mine, to end with me :
This purpose—that throughout my earthly life,
Mine should be mingled and made up with thine,—
And we two prove one force, and play one part,
And do one thing. Since death divides the pair,
'Tis well that I depart and thou remain
Who wast to me as spirit is to flesh :
Let the flesh perish, be perceived no more,
So thou, the spirit that informed the flesh,
Bend yet awhile, a very flame above
The rift I drop into the darkness by,—
And bid remember, flesh and spirit once
Worked in the world, one body, for man's sake.
Never be that abominable show
Of passive death without a quickening life—
Admetus only, no Alcestis now."

But Alcestis bids him remember that as he would not hesitate to die himself in order to achieve his great designs, so he should beware of choosing less nobly for his wife, "letting die" "all true life that lived in both of us."

"Look at me once ere thou decree the lot !'
Therewith her whole soul entered into his ;
He looked the look back, and Alcestis died.
And even while it lay, i' the look of him,
Dead, the dimmed body, bright Alcestis' soul
Had penetrated through the populace
Of ghosts, was got to Koré,—throned and crowned
The pensive queen o' the twilight, where she dwells
For ever in a muse, but half away
From flowery earth she lost and hankers for,—
And there demanded to become a ghost
Before the time.

Whereat the softened eyes
Of the lost maidenhood that lingers still
Straying among the flowers in Sicily,

Searched at a glance Alcestis to the soul,
 And said *
 'Hence, thou deceiver ! This is not to die,
 If, by the very death which mocks me now,
 The life, that's left behind and past my power,
 Is formidably doubled.'

Then follows one of Browning's ingenious comparisons between two half-armed athletes, one of whom should quit the combat, without leave, to complete his friend's equipment, and Admetus, as he is now, and as he would be when reinforced by his wife's spirit ; a comparison worked out too wordily for the "pensive queen of twilight," the Proserpine (recalled by Browning's descriptions, but effaced by the speech he invents for her) of whom Dante, Shakspeare, and Milton have each sung in such enrapturing strains ; but leading to this conclusion,—

" 'Two souls in one were formidable odds :
 Admetus must not be himself and thou ;'
 And so, before the embrace relaxed a whit,
 The lost eyes opened, still beneath the look ;
 And lo Alcestis was alive again."

A noble version of the story, but undramatic. Its personages are too wise to interest very deeply. Not in strength unmingled with weakness, in goodness without a taint of evil, in wisdom undashed with folly, does the drama find its materials. Our pity cannot be excited, our fears awakened, by the impersonations of abstract qualities. For, if grand, they are not human ; and to touch man's heart he needs to have exhibited before him like passions with his own—the temptations, struggles, sins, and griefs of man, not the passionless elevation of some superior being.

Still, if to Browning, as to most others, it is easier to point out, than to correct, what is amiss, we must nevertheless acknowledge him as the pleasantest guide who ever accompanied us through a Greek play. His remarks, always acute and interesting, are well worthy of consideration even when they do not win (which yet they oftenest gain) the full assent of our judgment. Where he falls most palpably short, the defect arises from that strong preference of truth to beauty, which reveals itself in the book before us (less often than in his previous works, however) by uncalled-for intrusions of the grotesque ; and (to mention a small though irritating instance) by deformities like "*Olympian*," "*Lubian*," and the rest of the restorations of Greek spelling in proper names, which we have carefully avoided copying in our citations. We are disposed to rate the author of *Balaustion* higher as an interpreter than as a translator ; and to prefer its original portions to the version of Euripides which it con-

* How the eyes could say the many words, of which we only extract a few, Mr. Browning may be better able than we to explain.

tains. For Browning's verse, at all times more remarkable for vigour than for harmony, refuses to echo the complex musical effects on which so much depends in the Greek drama; his sympathy with his author is, of necessity, an imperfect one; and his mind lacks repose, and is altogether of a too un-Hellenic cast to transmit to us the white light of ancient tragedy through an uncoloured medium.

Now exactly where Browning is defective, the author of the "*Atalanta in Calydon*" brings us a supply in over measure. He enters to a blameable excess into that antique shrinking from death, which is too little understood in *Balaustion*; so far from judging his personages by the standard of an advanced age, he does not view them at all as moral agents, but merely as the "fools of fate;" and, whatever else his choric strains may lack, they are never deficient in melodious sweetness. Thus the English reader who should fuse in his mind the principal characteristics of the two books which we have been considering (correcting minor points, such as the introduction of rhyme, by the recollection of Arnold's *Merope*), would gain some approximate notion of the tragedy of Euripides. If he is still unsatisfied, he must learn Greek and read the originals for himself: on every account, where practicable, by far the wisest course. For, as we have tried here and there to show, the most essential beauties here, even more than in other poets, are in the strictest sense incapable of being translated. The writer in another language can only indicate them to the discerning.

And certainly, as we have said already, it is to those who know the ancient classics best that restorations and translations of the antique, like those which we have been considering, give the most pleasure. For they sharpen their perception of the beauty, which it proves so difficult to reproduce; while, by keeping the eye long fixed upon it, they enable it to unfold itself to its gaze. They call them to unlock once more that long and noble gallery, the key to which they won years ago, but which want of leisure forbids some men to re-enter often without a special summons; and they supply a reason for indulging in the delightful employment of walking slowly from group to group, and from statue to statue, of its glorious sculptures. Who can wonder if, when the time for departure comes, the eye rests rather severely at first on the modern antiques in the antechamber? And yet (so varied are the movements of the human mind) we learn to love them too, alike for what they are in themselves, and for the vision of beauty which they recall to us; they begin to shine in our eyes with a double light—their own lustre and a borrowed and greater splendour,—the bas-relief, wrought with care and skill beneath a cold northern sky, becoming suffused with the roseate glow of that dawn which flushes the white marbles of Pentelicus and the waters of Ilissus.

E. J. HASELL.

MEMOIRS OF A CYNIC.

By THE AUTHOR OF "CONTRASTS."

I.

On the evening of the sixtieth anniversary of my birthday, the labours of the day being over, according to custom I took up a book to amuse myself with a couple of hours' reading before retiring to bed. The work I had taken up was the autobiography of Sir Thomas Bramston, K.B., a book attractive enough in itself, but which, on this occasion, did not claim my attention for more than a few minutes. Indeed, I had hardly finished the first paragraph before I closed the book to ruminate at my leisure over the train of thoughts it had conjured up. "Among the manie reason that historians give for the resignation of the Emperor Charles the Fifth," the paragraph said, "the words of an old and good officer under him are not of the lightest moment, whoe, desiring leave of the Emperor to depart and be dismist from his employment, the Emperor would needes know the reason moveinge him thereto, whoe replied, *Inter negotia vite et horam mortis debet esse spatium.*"

This sentence impressed me all the more, that I had been for some time reflecting whether I had not arrived at that age when a man, without incurring the stigma of idleness, may legitimately retire from active employment, and spend the remainder of his days in peace and quietude. The reply of the old officer seemed to confirm me in the conclusion I had already partly arrived at, that I might reasonably do so; and before seeking my bed that evening I determined to act upon it.

Should the reader consider that with a sound mind and good constitution I was not justified in devoting the remainder of my days to unprofitable ease, I beg in reply to submit that there were several extenuating circumstances in my case. In the first place I am unfortunately an old bachelor. I advisedly make use of the word "unfortunately," for Heaven knows I would willingly have married. The cause of my disappointment and my continued celibacy I will relate hereafter. Moreover, I have no relatives, and but few friends. Without being rich, I have economised sufficient to live during the rest of my life, if not in splendour, at least in ease, and at my death shall be able to leave something behind me, if not for the good of my own soul, at least for the worldly comfort and consolation of the sick and afflicted. Perhaps I may be able to leave, too, some solid memorials of my gratitude for those to whom I am under obligation, although, I am sorry to say, of these last there are but few now living.

Unfortunately my retirement from the active duties of life was not altogether attended with the results I had anticipated. Instead of enjoy-

ing my *otium cum dignitate* I experienced a far less classical result, and found myself mortally *ennuied*. This feeling gradually increased to such an extent that, at last, I found it absolutely necessary to seek some rational occupation for my mind, for utter inactivity began to have a most prejudicial effect on my nervous system. Nor, considering the active life I had previously led, was this much to be wondered at.

Possibly I cannot better commence my narrative than by giving the reader a very short sketch of my life, which also, to a certain degree, will lead to a better comprehension of my purpose in undertaking my present task.

During the sixty years of my life I have played many more parts than those mentioned by Shakespeare. I was left an orphan before I was eight years of age, and was placed under the (nominal) guardianship of my paternal uncle. At the age of sixteen I was entered as midshipman in the old East India Company's service, but two years afterwards I was obliged to leave from ill-health. My guardian then suggested I should enter one of the learned professions, but thinking my education for either Law, Physic, or Divinity had not been sufficiently matured, he placed me under the care of a private tutor, a man of very brilliant reputation, for the three years before I came of age. Without self-flattery I may conscientiously state that I did no discredit to my tutor. I acquired a really good classical education, based on what I had already learned at school, and also became a very fair mathematician. One year of the three I resided in Paris with my tutor, who, being himself an excellent French scholar (an accomplishment among private tutors even more rare then than in the present day), took great care to perfect me in the language, till at last I could both speak and write it correctly.

On coming of age I found I was cursed with an independence of four hundred a year, though possibly the reader may imagine that an inheritance of the kind should be spoken of in a more respectful manner. I regret the diversity of opinion between us, but still hold to my own. Four hundred a year, instead of stimulating a young man of education to exertion, as in my own case, is too frequently an inducement to idleness, while it is, on the other hand, insufficient to maintain him and a family in the luxury in which he has been accustomed to live. If he marries and is good for anything, he then for the first time attempts energetically to exert himself, and generally fails. I often think over the number of young men I have met with in my life, who, inheriting four or five hundred a year, have fallen into poverty before their, generally, early deaths.

To return to my own narrative. No sooner did I find myself in possession of my four hundred a year, than I threw over for the moment (as I endeavoured to convince myself) the idea of at once entering either of the learned professions. I determined that I would first see the world for a year, and then settle down steadily to work. The portion of the world I saw during that year was comprised in the city

of Milan, a few of the surrounding towns, and Lake Como. Finding at the end of the year that my cosmopolitan experience was hardly sufficiently extensive, I dedicated another year to Venice and Florence. The third and fourth I passed in Rome and Naples; then I returned northwards, and remained another year in Milan. In this manner I remained till nine years had passed over my head, never leaving Italy the whole of the time. I lived in a sort of luxurious idleness, studying a variety of subjects, but arrived at proficiency in none. I made no enemies, and but few friends, and my life passed away as happily, or at least as free from pain or care, as is possible in this world.

And then came two terrible incidents which changed the whole current of my life. In one, death took from me the only girl I had ever really loved, for although I had often and often imagined myself in love, the attachment I had formed for that dear one, proved that all the others, by comparison, had been little better than the idle freaks of a passing hour. The other event was the news of the death of my guardian, accompanied by the intelligence that he had not only died penniless, but that twelve years before, to recoup himself for a bad speculation, he had most dishonestly possessed himself of the whole of my property, selling it, and investing the proceeds in a government annuity of £600 a year on his own life, out of which he regularly transmitted to me every quarter-day one hundred pounds.

The terrible blow I had received before this intelligence reached me considerably diminished the shock I should otherwise have felt in thus suddenly discovering I was penniless. From considering myself a man of property I now found I was left with hardly sufficient money to pay my travelling expenses to England. On my arrival I found that the information I had received respecting my uncle's affairs was perfectly true, and I had now only my own exertions to rely on for support. What steps could I take? I could not dig, to beg I was ashamed. I had never yet earned a shilling, nor had I any idea even how to begin. Without help I could do nothing, so I looked about for it. I had only two relatives in England, and their relationship was too distant (they were half-brothers of my poor mother) to hold out much hope in applying to them. I had not heard from them for many years, and was only assured of their existence on referring to the "Post Office Directory." One, who had been educated as a barrister, I found had been for some years past employed on the public press. The other was a physician in moderate practice, and both were confirmed bachelors. Contrary to my expectation, these relatives received me with great kindness—the one connected with the press obtaining for me employment on his own newspaper.

If the first thirty years of my life were passed in comparative idleness, or at least unremunerative employment, not so the latter half. During the whole time I continued on the public press (and few men in that occupation had been more industrious), I passed through

almost every phase of the profession. I commenced as a reporter at the police courts; then wrote theatrical reports (always a favourite occupation of mine) for a Sunday paper. My knowledge of Italian and music afterwards obtained for me the appointment of musical and operatic critic for a fashionable morning paper; and then I was admitted as reporter into the gallery of the House of Commons. I have also on two occasions been a special war correspondent. Getting older, I turned my mind to writing leading articles, occasionally using my pen in other branches of literature. According to time-hallowed custom I ought perhaps here to state that my services had been underpaid; but conscientiously speaking this is not the case. On the contrary, I have always been fairly remunerated; and if I have not contrived to amass a fortune, at least I have been able to live in comfort.

When I was a young man press-writing was a very different affair from what it is at the present day. Gross personality then passed for wit, and vulgar abuse for sarcasm. At the same time this state of things was not without excuse. The touch of the gentler good-humoured sarcasm of the present day would not have been felt by the thick-skinned gentry, for whose reformation it was specially intended. Among all classes it was the same. The last of the Georges was then on the throne, and the abuses in every grade of society or public department, whether army, navy, pulpit, bar, or stage, were, according to our present views of right and wrong, perfectly astounding. Notwithstanding all the stereotyped cant about the high independent feeling of the British nation, I believe things would be in as bad a state to-day, had it not been for the incessant Herculean labours of the public press. Do not imagine, however, that the journalists' task was simply to point out an abuse, and that the nation immediately eradicated it, for that was far from being the case. Day after day, week after week, year after year, did the press point out to the nation the horrible despotism they were subjected to before the public would stir in the matter.

The enormous injustice and abuse which were then common in ecclesiastical affairs, seem now almost incredible. With one exception, the whole bench of bishops were advocates for negro slavery, and defended that "peculiar institution" so warmly, that Lord Eldon argued that there was nothing in it contrary to the principles of Christianity, or the reverend lords would not have supported it in the consistent manner they did. I remember two bishops being pointed out to me who had received their mitres from our English Pope, George the Fourth, while Regent, through the direct patronage of Court ladies of very indifferent reputation. One archbishop had accumulated so great a fortune from his See, that he was enabled on one new year's day to present each of his grandchildren, fifty-two in number, with one thousand pounds; and that with little perceptible diminution of his fortune. Another bishop had given to different members of his family church livings to the amount of thirty-two

thousand a year, without exciting the slightest scandal or disapprobation in the mind of the pure head of the only true church, by Act of Parliament established, that most religious and gracious King, George the Fourth. Another bishop lived for many years abroad in the house of a woman of disgraceful reputation. All his revenues, which were immense, he spent away from England, neglecting, with perfect impunity, the whole care of his diocese.

It required no little courage, I can assure you, on the part of the press to attack the abuses of the Church alone. A tacit understanding seemed to exist between it and the law to allow these infamies to be carried on unchallenged. The law legalised every injustice committed by the Church on condition that it had its share in the patronage; and the Church sanctified and absolved every legal infamy, provided it had for one of its objects the welfare of the Church temporalities; while the Crown stepped in and gave its sanction to both, thus forming a trinity of scandal which could not have been surpassed for bare-faced injustice and wickedness in the worst era of the Roman Catholic Church. That things in the Church are vastly changed for the better I am perfectly ready to admit; still, even in late years, the world has witnessed acts perpetrated with impunity, if not with praise, which future generations may stigmatise as infamous. For the welfare of the rich we have seen, in this capital city of ours, Christ's legatees—the poor—robbed of their inheritance, and the vast sums left for their education applied to the benefit of those who are perfectly able to pay for the advantages they receive. And all this is not only legalised by the law, but not unfrequently the very acts of spoliation themselves are blessed by our Church dignitaries.*

In the law, army, and navy, abuses existed scarcely less enormous

* A vast change for the better appears certainly to be looming in the distance, and the metropolitan public seem awakening to the extraordinary acts of injustice which, for the last thirty years, have been perpetrated without molestation. The press-writers also seem buckling on their armour for the fight; and when once they take a matter seriously in hand they generally succeed. But an abuse is still open which necessitates the utmost caution and supervision—the delays and legal expenses incurred in getting these reformatations through the Court of Chancery. As a specimen of the expense attending a litigation of the kind in that Court, may be quoted the present condition of the new scheme concerning the "prison charities." It having been determined that numerous small charities existing in the city of London for the benefit of prisoners for debt should be consolidated, and the gross proceeds, amounting to the yearly sum of £2,700, should be applied to some charitable use, an admirable scheme was drawn up for the purpose by the present Attorney-General, Sir J. Coleridge. The Vice-Chancellor, to whom it was submitted, did not however approve of it, and a fresh scheme had to be drawn up. At the present moment each of the different parishes and acting trustees interested in the matter (some of them to an amount not exceeding five pounds a year), have put in a claim of their own for the consideration of the Court. What prospect there may be of a speedy and economical termination can be judged from the fact, that there are at present no fewer than thirty-five solicitors' firms engaged in superintending the interests of their different clients.

than those in the Church. Still, the press went on, and, to a considerable extent, conquered, in spite of the continued threats, on the part of the law of severe punishment in this world, and on the part of the Church of eternal perdition in the next. And yet all the time those at the head of these abuses called themselves the most virtuous and respectable portion of the nation; and the rest believed them, and appeared almost to idolize them for the very impudence of the position they assumed.

Brooding over these dark reminiscences I determined, after my retirement, to write a work, and, if possible, of an original character. After great consideration I hit upon a notion which I believed would be perfectly novel, and which for some time found great favour in my eyes. It was to write a "Predicted History of England," from the passing of the Reform and Catholic Emancipation bills to the present time. I had called to mind an immense number of the predictions of what would be the fate of England did certain measures at different times before the House pass into law. After all, perhaps, I am hardly entitled to the credit of originality in the idea, for I may have taken it from my uncle the Editor, who had amused himself in making a collection of predictions uttered by eminent statesmen, divines, and judges, all of whom were imagined at the time to be oracles of little less than infallible wisdom.* I soon, however, gave up the attempt. The work was amusing enough at the beginning, and afforded considerable facilities for very pointed satire; but as I went on with it so many different elements of difficulty presented themselves, and these of so contradictory a description, that I was obliged to relinquish my task in despair. Every new project contained, as was predicted by the proposer, the elements of infinite good, no matter whether in foreign policy or home legislation; while the Opposition discovered in it the most destructive and prejudicial effects if carried into execution. Connected with the two Acts of Parliament I have named, predictions of the most alarming description were showered forth by the Tories. Before the end of the first two years of my History I had accumulated no fewer than seventy-nine "saps in the very foundation of the British constitution in Church and State;" and all these pointed out by legislators, noblemen, and other authorities of the most profound wisdom. The evils likely to fall on the nation went on accumulating till I could plainly perceive that before the end of ten years the whole country would be annihilated, or all that would remain of it would be the city of London in a proper state of dilapidation for the reception of the New Zealander whose advent has been so often and so loudly proclaimed.

After having put aside my "Predicted History of England," the

* I may possibly make use of some of my uncle's collection of celebrated predictions in a future chapter. They ranged from the passing of the Romilly bill for the abolition of punishment of death for stealing in a shop to the amount of five shillings, to the end of the first twenty years of the present century.

demon of *ennui* tyrannised over me to such an extent that I was obliged to seek for some occupation. At last I decided on commencing my autobiography. I determined, after mature consideration, to divide it into two parts—the first thirty years or idle portion of my life forming the one; the time I was engaged in the public press the other. In the former my experiences of life were of the gayer description; the latter, as a rule, the more serious, though in both many exceptions occurred. Frequently pathetic episodes would mix themselves up with the ridiculous in my earlier years; and in my later, the absurd would often mingle with the serious. Whether I shall afterwards submit the whole to publication remains to be seen.

II.

HAVING admitted in the former chapter that I was of a cynical disposition, I must say that I believe it to have been more the effect of education than a natural tendency. I might almost aver that there are few of a more serious temperament than I am, or who dwell with greater interest on the pathetic. From my earliest childhood, however, the ridiculous has thrust itself into every action of my life, and that in direct opposition to my will. I have been haunted through my whole existence by the absurd, and that without the slightest power on my own part to avoid it. Even in religious matters I can detect the same tendency. I have ever entertained the greatest respect for religion and its ministers, yet, almost with my earliest notions of a Deity, the ridiculous has mixed itself up more or less. It may appear singular to the reader that I was possessed of any religious feeling, and I should even have doubted the fact myself, were I not able to recall my very first conception of the Deity. And with this reminiscence not the slightest particle of the ridiculous is mixed. Nay more, it is the earliest circumstance I can remember, and the greater portions of it are at present as vividly painted on my memory as at the time they occurred. I must then have been about six years of age, as my mother, who died two years before my father, was in her last illness. I had been guilty of some infantile peccadillo—possibly appropriating some delicacy to my own use, to which I was not entitled. But of one thing I am certain, that when accused of my crime I stoutly and unhesitatingly denied it. The evidence against me, however, was overwhelming, and I was brought up before my poor mother for judgment. I can see her now before me as she sat up in bed, supported by pillows, calmly remonstrating with me on the wickedness of a lie, and showing me God's anger at a sin of the kind. As I remained obstinate, however, under her admonitions, she placed me at the foot of the bed as a punishment, where I was to remain till I came to a better frame of mind. In a few minutes this occurred: I burst into tears and ran round to the side of the bed, begging her forgiveness. She, in return, clasped me in her arms and kissed me, and wept scarcely less plentifully than I did myself.

This was the last reminiscence I had of my mother, for I do not think I ever saw her again. In that one interview, however, I had thoroughly conceived the possibility of the existence of a being who could love fondly, and at the same time punish. I have since, in reflecting on this power of a mother over her child, and in watching its effects on other children, come to the conclusion that not only had I received from my mother a knowledge of the two attributes of the Deity already mentioned, but that I had also received from her the idea of Omnipotence—a power that could protect me from all evil; of Omniscience—for I believed she knew all; and faith—for I could not have doubted a word she told me, no matter how abstruse the theology concealed in the childish question I might put to her.

After the death of my mother, I and my brother, two years my junior, were placed under the care of my paternal grandmother. And here, unlike the pure theology I had obtained from my mother, the absurd began to mix itself up with my ideas, not at the time, certainly, for I was merely puzzled by her arguments, but as I grew older and was better able to analyse them. My grandmother was an exceedingly spiteful old woman, and yet proud of her piety. I believe if I had placed the same faith in her as I had done in my mother, I should have been about as cruel and vindictive a character as it would be possible to imagine. Her ideas of resignation were singular in the extreme. No person ever offended her that she did not use every means in her power to seek retaliation. If she were unable to obtain any, she had one "pious" remark ready for the occasion—"No matter, they will suffer for it hereafter, that's one blessing." She was particularly fond of applying Scripture or theological arguments, even to the commonest events of life. The Church Catechism of course was instilled into us. It was, in her idea more essential to salvation than even the Scriptures themselves. Oh! how fearfully were my brother and I punished if we had not learnt a certain portion of it every day. Moreover, she had an abominable habit of examining us on the meaning of the questions and answers, and severe indeed were the punishments we received if our replies were not satisfactory. When my poor brother was between five and six years of age, I remember his being called up for his first examination on the Catechism. After replying correctly enough to the first question, he broke down at the second. When asked, "Who gave you that name?" his reply was "My Godfathers and my Godmothers in my baptism, wherein I——"

"Stop," said my grandmother; "do you know what is meant by your baptism?"

"Yes," said my brother.

"Explain it," said the old lady.

Laying his hand on the pit of his stomach he looked in her face and said: "This is my baptism."

I forget what punishment he had given him, but if it was not a

severe one in proportion to his fault, it was the only one she ever awarded us that was not.

What makes the old lady's behaviour appear still more atrocious, was the way in which she used to escape from difficult theological questions we put to her. And here I may state that children occasionally do put theological questions that would puzzle far greater authorities than my old grandmother to answer. Her usual reply to all questions she found difficult was: "By faith, my dear." Nor was this solely confined to questions or discourses on theological subjects. She would occasionally bring it in on others purely mundane when she had any difficulty in replying, for she insisted on the ultramontane infallibility of her own wisdom. I remember once, when nearly eight years of age, reading to her in Goldsmith's "Roman History," about one of the mythical kings of Rome who had a difference of opinion with an augur. To a statement of the augur the king replied—

"Why, you might as well tell me that I could cut through this whetstone with a razor."

"Cut boldly," replied the augur. And the king cut it through accordingly.

"How did he do that, grandmamma?" I asked.

"By faith, my dear," said the old lady.

But after all, even in the present day, half a century later, with the many modifications and improvements which have taken place in the spiritual instruction of children, occasionally circumstances crop up which prove that if the word "faith" is not brought forward with the same frequency as it was by my grandmother, other words scarcely less inappropriate are used. Not long since, shortly after the illness of the Prince of Wales, I entered, with the ladies of a family I was visiting in —shire, a National School, in which my hostess took an especial pride, and of which she was one of the best patronesses. By way of proving the excellency of the instruction taught in it she requested the teacher to give me some examples of the ability of the children. The teacher, nothing loth, ranged them on the rising forms one above another till all were in their places. Some of the usual questions were then put by the teacher, and the children, who of course had answered them fifty times before, gave their replies in a perfectly satisfactory manner. My hostess was then asked if she would like to put some questions to them. This she readily did, and being naturally of a most patriotic temperament, she asked,—

"Why should we love the Prince of Wales?"

The whole of the children for some moments seemed perfectly incapable of replying. The teacher, alarmed for the credit of the school, then addressed the children seriously, telling them they ought to think over the question, and that those who considered themselves capable of answering were to hold up their hands. After a minute's silence three of them extended their arms to signify that they were prepared with replies.

"Tommy," she said, addressing a chubby-faced little boy; "you answer first, 'Why should we love the Prince of Wales?'"

"Because he was good, and took his physic, and got well," was the reply, with a tone of assurance which seemed to say, "deny that if you can."

To his great astonishment however, this reply did not satisfy the teacher, and she then put the question to the next pupil. The boy remained silent and perplexed for some moments, and then said,—

"Please, teacher, I forget."

"Mary, my dear," said the teacher, addressing a prim little girl; "Why should we love the Prince of Wales?"

"By prayer," replied Mary, with a sanctity and solemnity of tone which seemed to reprobate the behaviour of her two male fellow-pupils.

I could quote examples of the kind by hundreds, though possibly not one I might mention would be more absurd than different instances which have come under the reader's own notice, all tending to show how absurdly are the beautiful principles of the Christian religion instilled into the minds of children by the incapacity of their teachers. One instance, however, I cannot refrain from quoting, so perfect in its way does it appear to me. I one day visited, for the purpose of collecting information for a newspaper article, the magnificent Reformatory Schools for Criminal Boys, at ——. So admirable were all the arrangements connected with the establishment that I at first imagined it would be impossible to find anything in it either to blame or ridicule, or that the absurd could in any manner be mixed up with it. However, even there I found in one instance the sublime and the ridiculous mingled in an extraordinary manner with the theological. In going over the building with the chaplain, he noticed that a certain pupil was absent from the workshops, and on making inquiries respecting him, was informed that he had been rebellious at work that morning, and as a punishment had been, by order of the Governor, placed in a solitary cell for the remainder of the day. The Governor had left word with the superintendent of the workshop that when the chaplain should make his usual round, his attention should be called to the subject, so that he might reason with the boy on the impropriety of his conduct. On leaving the workshop the chaplain said to me,—

"If you have no objection we will see the boy at once, and then you will be able to judge of the nature of our punishments, and satisfy yourself that they are rather moral than physical."

Accompanied by the warder we now entered a corridor, and a door being opened we saw in a cell a boy of perhaps thirteen years of age, who appeared as truculent a little monkey as could well be imagined. After all, perhaps, it was less the fault of the poor child than the life he had been compelled to lead. Possibly the only instruction he had received before his entrance into the school had been to "move on," for the chaplain told me he was, on his arrival,

as ignorant as the beasts of the field, and hardly aware of the common decencies of life. He scowled at us as we entered the cell, but remained silent.

"So I hear," said the chaplain, "you have been a naughty boy this morning, and have refused to obey the orders of the superintendent of the workshop. Nor is this the first time you have been guilty of such faults. Nobody wishes to be unkind to you or to punish you, but discipline must be maintained. Now promise me you will behave better for the future, and thus relieve us from the necessity of punishing you, which I assure you we do with great pain."

The worthy chaplain's tone, more perhaps than even his words, seemed to have a wonderful effect on the child. His sulky look vanished, and he began to cry.

"Now tell me," said the chaplain, "why are you so naughty?"

"I can't help it, sir," he replied. "It's not my fault."

"Whose fault is it, then?" asked the chaplain.

"It's my original sin, sir," replied the boy.

"Your original sin!" said the chaplain. "Nonsense; what do you mean by that? You do not know what you are talking about."

"Yes, sir," said the boy; "it's my original sin, and it breaks out all over me, legs and all."

So saying, he pulled up his trousers and showed us a strong cutaneous eruption on the legs, which had doubtless made the poor child fractious. He evidently, by way of accounting to himself for his mutinous behaviour, had collected together some scraps of the theological teaching he had received, and condensed them into the conclusion that it was his original sin which had caused the eruption on his legs, thus compelling him to be mutinous against his own inclination.

To return to my own adventures. My brother and I continued our unhappy life with our grandmother for nearly two years. In the daytime we attended a small school in the neighbourhood, spending our evenings and mornings at home. School hours have generally but little attraction for children of our age, but with us it was different, for so unattractive was home, we found the schoolroom preferable. Things went on in this manner till at the end of the two years a circumstance occurred which greatly shocked me, and which was the cause of my altering to a considerable degree the dislike I had taken to my grandmother.

At the time of my mother's death my father was suffering from ill-health. The shock her decease caused him increased his malady, and very serious symptoms began to develop themselves. Physicians of the first eminence were called in, who said he must leave England immediately, or consumption would supervene. This for him was not as great a difficulty as might have been imagined. He was a junior partner in a large wholesale wine merchant's house, carrying on an extensive business with Madeira. It was now decided that he should

visit that island, and remain there in connection with the firm for twelve months. And this was the immediate cause of our being placed under the care of our grandmother. The year passed on, and the reports we received of his health were of a somewhat favourable character. Still, the progress he had made was so small that it was considered advisable he should remain another year. Alas! the favourable promise held out at the end of the first year was not realized. Six months afterwards we were informed that a relapse had taken place, and serious symptoms had appeared which gave great cause for anxiety. The following month my grandmother received a letter from him, stating, that as he was now assured his malady was incurable, he proposed returning to England that he might die in the midst of his family. This intelligence was a source of great sorrow to my grandmother, and indeed to us all, although scarcely as much to my brother and myself as might have been expected. We knew, in fact, but little of him, as we were too young at the time of his leaving England to have any very great knowledge of his good qualities, and the letters we had received from him hardly conveyed a favourable impression to our minds, for they all spoke in high terms of our grandmother, and contained numerous injunctions that we should obey her in every respect. If they contained anything else she withheld it from us.

It was now time for my father's arrival in England, and yet we received no intelligence of him. My grandmother's uneasiness at the delay became so great that she positively forgot to maintain her severe discipline over us. Nay, more, she even went so far as to show us more kindness than she had ever yet done—and that, after all, was little indeed. At length a letter reached her, written in an unknown hand, and dated from Southampton. It was from the agent of the ship, and stated that it was with great regret he had to inform her that my father had died during the voyage to England, and that his body had been committed to the deep. I was in the room when my grandmother read this letter. The first effect it had on her was to bring on a half-fainting fit, from which she recovered, and then went into violent hysterics. Her screams brought the servants into the room, and I was then sent out. It was long before she recovered from the fit—her sorrow, I believe, continued unabated till her death. I remember the effect she produced on me the evening she received this letter. She was walking to and fro in the parlour, her hands clasped together, the tears coursing each other rapidly down her face, while she ejaculated from time to time, "My God, my God, what shall I do!" From that moment to the present, when my mind reverts to the old lady, this last scene starts forward, and completely neutralises in my mind all the anger and aversion her despotic conduct had engendered in my breast.

(To be continued.)

A SHORT VACATION.

I'd vowed this month I'd dedicate
To somewhat sterner metre ;—
My theme I'd "strictly meditate,"
And make mankind discreeter ;
Alas ! I have but proved again
How plans and practice vary ;
I left the lyre and took the train—
Humanum est errare !

I said, to "live laborious days"
One needs a change of diet,—
No man the "spirit clear" can "raise"
Without pure air and quiet ;
I fancy now my Muse prefers
A climate *not* so airy ;
You can't foresee these whims of hers—
Humanum est errare !

'Tis plain that that austerer song,—
More anger's birth than pity's,—
Proceeds alone from men who long
Have drawn thick breath in cities ;
And yet, who knows ? This Muse of mine
May try some new vagary ;—
I won't go back—for all the Nine,—
Humanum est errare !

But oh ! for that misguided world
Whom none can now enlighten
Since I on shingly beach am curled,
Inglorious, at Brighton !
Nor I alone, but here *you* are,—
I wish you'd fan me, Mary,
And find me out a fresh cigar—
Humanum est errare !

AUSTIN DOBSON.

PAUL TEMPLAR :

A PROSE IDYLL.

THIRTY YEARS AGO ! And now as the wild, grey sky is fast glooming to utter darkness, and the ragged clouds, urged on by the mad North-East wind, are hurrying across the smooth face of heaven, and I feel all the chill and depression of the dying hour of day palling upon my soul,—I bring to memory this night thirty years ago. A night so like to this one—as wild, as cold, as joy-killing, with just such a grey-clouded, harsh-breath'd sunset, the sun unseen, its heat unfelt, and all Nature shuddering because the Angel of the North had wrapped it in his deadly embrace.

The Shadow of that night hath ever since been round me : I have dwelt in it, walked in it, worked in it, and out of it have been evolved, for good or evil, all the issues of my life.

Thirty years ago, this November day, I, PAUL TEMPLAR, son of a Yorkshire farmer, living far up near the Durham border, inwards a mile or two from the great eternal rocks that breast the waves of the Northern sea, had wandered to some familiar caverns, deep under the jutting cliffs, where I loved to sit and hear the sea bellowing through the resounding vaults, or hearken to the curlew's scream, or watch the scurrying gales as they whirled past thick and misty—while through and above it all rolled the ceaseless noises of the distant waves, murmuring in their deepest tones and clapping their hands to God.

A queer, bookish fellow was I, not overloved of my father, who strengthened his hands and loins to win his bread, and little cared for my idle fingers and mooning brains about his house. But he had to yield to the necessity of my laziness. I was deformed in the shoulders, and my pale face marked me out as a weakling, from four brawny, Herculean youths who were the pride of our homestead. How much they four loved and pitied me ! How gentle were they to their 'gentleman brother,' as they used to call me—given to books and lounging, while they worked hard and sweatfully, tending and forcing the fitful, often too thankless, soil, under the invidious sky.

My mother was dead—died in bearing me.

Noblest of these noble brothers was the eldest. I see him now, Harold, with his great ruddy face, the broad forehead, and the curly auburn hair, and the brown eyes, deep and lustrous, and the well-knit, massive form.

I see too that fair girl he brought from Devon, whither he went to serve his farm apprenticeship, flaxen-haired, blue-eyed, coral-

lipped beauty that she was, and so tender and fragile, our big folk for a while looked at her with gentle awe, knowing not what to do with her or how to entreat her. As if some rare Dresden vase had fallen into the hands of brutish hinds, who recognized only its beauty, not its use, and cherished it fearfully, with a feeling something between worship and wonder.

Fondly did I love Eva, with a pure brotherly love—and more fondly still I loved Eveline, the double image of her father and mother, the pet of all our hearts.

And it is of these two, that, recalling the events of this night thirty years ago, the bright, fair figures stand out to my eyes as real as at the time, against that background of grey and black and stormy eve. O bright, fair figures, long since translated and transfigured, where my eyes can no more behold your beauty!

The morning had risen as glum and cold as the evening afterwards went out. Fast drove the steel-shaded clouds, harsh was the voice and angry the breath of the wind. A sort of day I loved much, when I could get down on the shore behind some rock, and shelter myself from the chilling blasts. Eva intended to go to N—, a town twelve miles off, down in a little vale, that carried a small stream to the sea, where a few houses and fishermen's huts sheltered a community quaint and quiet; living mostly on the trade done with the surrounding thinly-populated district. Part of the way was over a hill, nearly four miles from our house, and along its top, where it was scarped away in a huge Titanic break straight down to the sea. Great rocks jutted out here and there, and many a cave and fissure pitted its black face; below, was a pavement of tremendous fragments strewn and piled with the strengthful abandon of Nature, among which the high tide surged and boiled and hissed. Over this hill, down again to a valley and then along the shore round the next headland went the road to N—.

They had promised Eva the light, two-wheeled cart; and Eveline, who was to have a new dress, the main object of the journey, was to accompany her. A farmer's wife thinks little of such an excursion, and, though the giants humorously warned Eva, at breakfast, of the roughness of the day, they never thought of dissuading her from the drive. I offered to go with her as far as the cliff, about four miles, taking with me my dinner and some books, and to await her return in the early afternoon. So Harold brought round the cart, with the patient old mare, and lifted in Eva and Eveline, and last of all, in the wantonness of strength, me, amidst jokes and laughter. And away we went. . . .

I wandered about above and below, and by and by sat down secure in a favourite cave, reached by a path from the top, which only a light body and cunning hands and feet could safely use. My eyes, weary with reading, had been resting sleepily on the weird, troubled

scene beyond ; my ear had been lulled by the thunder of the waves on those glistening rocks. I knew not the hour, but I was so intimate with Nature, I felt sure that Eva should long since have been with me on her way home.

Twice had I gone out and struggled up to the highest point of the cliff, whence I ought to have seen her cart climbing the hill. After noon the weather had grown colder, angrier, and more gloomy. Grand indeed were the waves, with their tossing manes of snowy foam under that black sky.

As I descended the second time disappointed to my cave, I saw, with alarm, the north and east growing more desperately dark—the clouds quickened their speed to a riotous rate—and the drizzle blew, cold and hard upon my face.

"Coom, Eva !" I said, "coom along soon, Eva and Eveline. Storm and night are behind ye. Coom on safe and speedily, my darlings !"

By and by the storm drove up fell and furious. O how the monster sea lashed out and roared amain ! The scouring drifts of rain dashed past my cave's mouth and flung their cold drops back into my face as I shrank to the farthest end.

"Nay," said I, peering out anxiously, "God save thee, Eva. Mayst thou not leave the shelter of the cosy haven till this be over."

I grew uneasy. There was danger now, so vicious was the gale, in climbing even the few feet between me and the top ; but, after waiting vainly a long time for a lull, and finding that the air grew darker and darker and the storm more fierce, I braved my heart for another effort and went up again.

Whiff—whirl—what a gust ! It nearly blew me off my feet. I stood as manfully as I could, and tried to make out the line of road. I could not see a hundred yards. The mist and rain and falling darkness veiled every feature of the landscape from my sight. I listened trembling.

"God help thee !" I cried ; "Oh ! where art thou, Eva ? O little Eveline, evangel, where are now thy little face and feet, the sunshine and the music of our home ?"

At this moment I heard a shrill cry coming through the storm. It was a sea-mew surely ? It seemed not far from me, and it was sharp and so inhuman.

There it was again ! And now another . . . fainter, sweeping by my ears on the loud-voiced wind. I breasted the storm down the hill, shading my eyes with my hand from the blinding drift, and pressing on desperately with a strength I was unconscious of. Two hundred yards—and I heard the shriek again, more subdued, but this time quite close to me. Yet I could see nothing in the road. It was certainly the cry of a child.

"Good heavens ! Am I bewitched ? It is in my ear. Eva ! Eveline !"

The little cry again. I looked about me. I was standing at a

well-known point of the road. Here there jutted up two great pinnacles of rock, named the Danish Twins, and the road-maker had carried his road round them on the land side. Betwixt the pinnacles, which were about twenty feet apart, was a chasm, which came up to the edge of the road, in the shape of a letter V, sloping gradually from the apex. Around its lips and sides were mingled together rocks and brushwood and broom. It sloped down some fifteen feet towards a broad ledge of rock, a vantage place sheltered by the pinnacles, where I had often stood and gazed at the glorious prospect; and then there was a sheer fall over the ledge of two hundred feet, down to the monster rocks that threw up their jagged points below.

I leaned over the lip of the upper end of the chasm, peering down through bush and brier, towards the first ledge, and then, as my eyes fell on two light objects stretched upon the ledge, with the wind and rain whirling about them, my heart nearly stopped its beat, and the breath went out of my body.

I stooped down and examined the road. 'Twas clear enough what had happened. Here was the mark of the wheel which had come too near the treacherous point of the chasm, and had broken away its crumbling apex. There just below were the bruised bushes to show how the cart had turned over—cart and horse and precious freight—and, for the rest, by some God's chance, there, before my eyes, were the two figures lying upon the ledge. As for the cart and mare

I remember how, when seeing that sight and taking into my soul all that it implied, there seemed to well up within me a fountain of devotion and resolve, such as I had never felt before. Of a sudden it was as if I had become possessed with a supernatural power. My heart grew like steel. I forgot, in the mastering enthusiasm of the moment, my poor, nerveless body; and the soul within me, big with the idea of saving those two loved and precious lives, seemed to swell with a giant's strength.

"Eva!" I shouted in the mad noise of the elements.

The larger of the two dim figures did not move. The smaller I thought I could see take an arm from the other's neck. Then it cried out piping and shrill:—

"Uncle Paul! Uncle Pau—u—u—l!"

"Eveline!" I cried, "darling Eveline, keep still for God's sake! What's mamma doing?"

"O, O, O Uncle Paul, come here!"

Down I dashed in a stupid frenzy, headlong and careless, and missing my grasp of a bush, stumbled and fell. A sharp scarp of rock received my thigh on its point, rent it down for twenty inches, and then let me drop on my back, roughly on the ledge, beside the figures.

It was many minutes before I recovered my senses. All the while the pitiless storm beat on us three. I came to myself to find Eveline with her arms round my neck, calling still, "*Uncle Paul!*"

The blood was running copiously from my wound. I tore the skirt from the little girl and bound up my thigh as well as I could. I felt that their lives depended on mine. When I turned to look at Eva, I found her lovely face pallid and wet, her clothes and hair drenched with the rain. On her right temple was a bruise. She showed no signs of life. I chafed her hands. I breathed into her cold lips. I dragged her in under some sheltering bushes and urged the little one to help me rub her mamma's hands. At length there were symptoms of life, and by and by she opened her eyes and spoke to me. She could lie there conscious, but she could not move. I knew why . . . there was a fourth, a hidden life in the balance that night.

We could now scarcely see each other's faces. I drew the child in under the brush and tied her to her mother. I besought them both not to stir hand or foot. I took off my coat and threw it over them. I buttoned my waistcoat about the little one. And then I resolved, wounded and half-naked as I was, to try and get to Winnersly, our home, for help. There was no dwelling nearer. I hoped that Harold's anxiety might bring him out in search of us, and that I should meet him on the way. By this time, what with loss of blood and the forlorn responsibility of my situation, I began to feel giddy and weak.

Then I knelt down and prayed. I know not what I said. I only know I pleaded for their precious lives—and offered my own as a ransom for them if it might be. I only know that in the course of that transcendent appeal I seemed to see new light and gain new strength, though the sharp pain in my thigh warned me that the work I had to do would task my very life. Then I kissed them both—I could no longer see their faces—and commending them to the God of the winds and storms, I essayed to climb to the top of the cliff. Into the rough bushes, among the thorny broom, grasping and letting go—feeling and doubting—step by step upward I fought my way. I forgot the anguish of my wound, in the freshness of my spirited resolve to save the dear ones below. Twice or thrice I heard Eva's gentle voice cheering me and saying—

"Are you up yet, Paul? Save us, Paul. God help you, Paul."

I kept my groans quiet, thrilling as was my pain. Twice I missed my hold and nearly fell backwards, twice recovered with bleeding hands and fainting breath, but my soul was strong and hopeful.

"God bless you, Uncle Paul! Save us, Uncle Paul. God help you, Uncle Paul!" echoed a tiny voice, and my heart leaped to hear it.

"Paul, weakling, now for a steady, determined heart. They must and shall be saved!"

At length I stood on the brink. The most dangerous part of my work was over. For the sake of their lives it had been carefully and slowly done. But the exertion left me feebler. I had to stop and adjust the bandage. The lacerated thigh was so painful, I could scarcely bear to touch it. With a grim resolution I clenched my teeth, and drew the cloth tight, until the anguish was intolerable. I hoped to stay the bleeding.

"Good God, how shall I ever do these four miles?"

I had not even a stick to lean upon, to relieve my leg. Yet I set out briskly. On my back was hurled the fury of the storm as I stumped and limped toilsomely along. Every step was a fresh agony. But every moment I seemed to hear:

"*Save us, Paul! God help you, Uncle Paul!*"

And it formed a sort of burden and refrain, keeping time with my trembling footsteps as I laboured along. It was so dark I could never have kept the road had it not been very familiar to me. An age seemed to have passed when I knew, by a change in the level, that I had gone only one mile. My heart began to sink, and I sat down a moment to rest. The stiffness and soreness of my wound were keenly brought home to me by the act. Could I possibly go three miles more in my present state? I ran over in my mind the difficulties of the way. There was not a hut or a house between me and home. A long piece of common, a deep dip in the road, and a hill, up which I had often bounded—these things lay before me, and here was I groaning with pain and the very life flickering in me.

"But," I said, "Harold's wife and Harold's child must be saved. Courage, Paul. *'God bless you, Paul! God help you, Uncle Paul!'*"

As I put my hand on the ground to raise myself, it lighted on a round object. I seized and felt it. It was some wayfarer's staff. He had gone on his journey, but he had left this here for me,—I thought. My spirit revived.

"Bravo, Paul! push on. God hath sent thee a staff to lean upon."

I was so encouraged that I did the next mile almost rapidly. My thoughts went back to the two poor things behind me—"Oh! shall I be in time?"—and they went on to the house before me, with the five sturdy, unconscious men, who, had they known, would have swept along this road with great rapid strides, and have borne my beauties in their giant arms home to life and warmth.

So I seemed to walk and leap and praise God for the help of the staff. But in the faith of it I was doing too much: I was using up my strength at a terrible rate. When I knew I had gone more than another mile, my steps slackened, and with my heart palpitating and my breath gone, I tumbled on the ground. The shock wrung from me an irrepressible shriek of agony.

"*O via dolorosa!* I cannot go on. This anguish is greater than I can bear. God himself seems pitiless, as his storm comes down so

ruthlessly, and the awful gloom drapes and stifles my ardour and my hope. *O via crucis!*"

These last words reminded me of the Great human Redeptor. "Is it not so, ever?" I said. "Is not the way of love the way of tears?"

Here was I wailing over my own anguish, and there were the three lives, and the voices ever in my ear, yet unregarded in that moment of selfish depression. "*God help you, Uncle Paul.*" I staggered again to my feet, and with desperate slowness and patience halted along—that torn hip exherciating me at every movement.

How I got on I know not. Weakness and pain were fast subduing my zeal. So how often succumbs the noblest soul to bodily anguish! I must have become delirious. I shouted and sang—I adjured my own body to be patient—I called aloud to Heaven to help me. I said,

"They *shall* be saved, Paul. '*God help you, Paul.*'" And then I stumbled again, coming cruelly to the ground. The staff flew out of my hand, and I sank down with a groan, thinking that at last God had deserted me.

"Oh!" I said, "I had hoped that this poor, weak, and worthless life might have been redeemed from its abjectness in my brothers' sight, in my own consciousness, in God's estimation—by the saving of those three lives. Gladly then would I have lain down to die rewarded by the manly shout of my manly brothers. 'O well done, Paul. Well done!'"

But, as it seemed, it was not to be. I lay on my side unable to move. The groans I could not repress answered the wild menace of the winds, and said—"I yield ye all."

I groped for the staff. It was past recovery. Vainly I tried to get upon my feet without it. My wounded leg was now useless.

Then I was tempted to lie still there and die. The life was gradually chilling in me. My head swam. I nearly swooned. But again there came before my vision the two pictures: the precious lives to be saved, there on the ledge behind me—in front of me the noble hearts to be blessed.

"O Paul, if every step were bloody, yea with great drops of blood, and every movement a new torture, it were thy need to save them."

My heart grew stronger at the thought. I dragged myself along on hands and knees, weeping, with anguish, as I went, but praying and hoping still. . . . I cannot describe the horrors of that part of my way. A good deal of it I must have gone on unconscious. I was losing my reason. Hands and knees were bleeding. The cold driving into my exposed body made my teeth chatter. At length I swooned in good earnest. . . .

I know not how long I had lain thus, when suddenly I woke up, with a vividness that was startling. I thought I heard a terrible shriek, which pierced through swoon and deadness—to my very soul.

"*Paul, for God's sake save us, quick!*"

I could just lift my head. It was all I could do. The numb, stiff, bruised limbs, I no longer had power over them. There was only one more effort left to me. I shrieked with all my remaining strength like the voice I had heard—like a maniac: shrieked out unceasingly, the wild wind carrying away my cries from me, on its wings, God knew whither. I thought, 'I will spend my last breath to save them.' And so thinking, as my voice grew weaker and I felt myself to be dying—I concentrated my strength in one last effort—

Yes! O thank God, there was a responsive cry close at hand! Voices and lights, and in a minute or two the four strong men with Harold at their head, had reached me!

"Paul, for God's sake, Paul, what does this mean? Where are *they*?"

He had gently taken up my head, while the lantern glow fell upon my ghastly face and on my glazed eyes. I could not answer him. I simply clasped my hands in token of thankfulness.

The strong man wrung his hands.

"Give him brandy, quick. Do you know where *they* are?" I tried to nod. "He does. O Paul, wake up and tell us. Nay, look here, look *here*, brothers! How dreadful!"

They looked at my bleeding hands, then at my knees, then at the bloody wrappings round my thigh. I began to revive. In a few minutes I told them slowly where I had left Eva and Eveline.

"Where did you hurt yourself?"

"There. At the Hurry Scar, below the Twins."

"Have you come all the way like this?"

I nodded.

"*O well done, Paul, bravely done!*" cried the lusty giants in a chorus, and I swooned away for joy.

LONG was I the hero of that homestead, where by-and-by another little Evangel came to look upon the uncle who had saved her life. Sweet, sweet and priceless to me are the memories of the grateful devotion of them all to me—still further wrecked and weakened by the terrors of that night. For my wounded thigh long kept me in peril of my life, and when it was healed, had so shrunk up, I could only walk with the help of crutches.

**

NEVERTHELESS from that night, the imbecility of my past years went away. I had learned a lesson in the mysteries of life. It were possible, I had then discovered, that even I should hold in my hand the precious balances of human fates, and with weakling but determined zeal, there were yet left to me by Providence, powers of good, of rescue from evil.

EDWARD JENKINS.

A POET OF TO-DAY.*

SOME seven years ago a metrical drama, modelled on the antique, and entitled *Philoctetes*, was published anonymously, and immediately arrested the public attention. The critics were unanimous in its praise, and justly so. There was but one writer in existence (on the supposition that it was not the first offshoot of a new poetic brain) to whom its authorship could be assigned, viz., Mr. Matthew Arnold. It was too severely classical for Mr. Swinburne, although there was fire in it which again and again summoned up his name in the mind of the reader; but no one would have been surprised had it been discovered that it was the work of the author of "Empedocles on Etna." However, such was not the case; it was found that the writer of the drama was a young aspirant in the field of literature, who had thus inaugurated his career in a manner at once striking and full of promise: Majestic, and yet passionate, with a luxuriance of imagery perfectly astonishing, the drama possessed elements which deserved to enshrine it amongst the best modern works of its kind, and to secure it a high place in our literary treasures. *Philoctetes* had been clothed by the great Sophocles in robes truly regal, his adventures and vicissitudes affording tragic scope of the finest description for the Greek poet; and it therefore required some daring on the part of a new writer in this far-off era to address himself to a task which was certain to prove either a fiasco or an avouchment of genius. Nevertheless, success justified the adventurer; and a second perusal of the volume after the lapse of years will only serve to sustain the judgment passed upon it on its first appearance. It was something noticeable, too, that the attention of the reading public—busy for the most part in the consumption of literary garbage—should have been induced to turn aside by the very power of the new singer, to listen to strains with which it had been rarely treated. The writer came not with tinsel in his hand, but nuggets of pure gold, which the public, too often blind to the best that is offered it, accepted with unaccustomed prescience. The poem not only appealed to all readers possessing scholarship and a cultivated taste, but took a far wider range by the emotional power which it displayed. Those over whom the old Greek drama exercised but little charm were impressed with the poetic fervour of the English imitation, and welcomed it as a contribution of genuine art.

* "Searching the Net: a Book of Verses." By John Leicester Warren, author of "*Philoctetes*." London: Strahan & Co. 1873.

Naturally the further appearance of one who had so successfully grappled with a magnificent subject was looked forward to with some interest, if not eagerness. Nor were the expectations so indulged disappointed. After the production of "*Orestes*," a second metrical drama, which was a work of superior order, though not able to vie with its predecessor, Mr. Warren issued his "*Rehearsals: a Book of Verses*." Concerning this it is not necessary to say much here, but one or two observations are imperatively demanded. There are poems in the volume which for picturesqueness and rich colour have rarely been excelled, whilst the artistic finish of many of the efforts reminds one forcibly of some of the most successful minor pieces of Tennyson. The author has studied compression and concentration to some purpose, as will be admitted on a perusal of the "*Hebrew Lament over Defeat*," an expostulation supposed to be delivered by the Almighty to his chosen people, and a poem entitled simply, "*An Ode*." The stanzas, too, on Joan of Arc are remarkable from another point of view. Under the guidance of the poet the reader is transplanted to the fifteenth century; and the whole scene in which the heroine appears is realized with a vividness and a clearness which are truly surprising. The manipulation of the various kinds of verse in which the volume is written is very masterly. The poems are short, and prove the author's capacity to deal with the lyrical as well as the more sustained form of his art. The only remark which might seem derogatory to Mr. Warren that we have to make upon his "*Rehearsals*" is their extreme vagueness. It is with difficulty that we apprehend their meaning in some instances; and in others where we do, we notice a lack of faith or anchorage, which is saddening occasionally, though not altogether hopeless. The singer was young, and will, doubtless, be all the better now for his probationary period of gloom. It is noteworthy, indeed, that all intensely subjective poets are, at some period of their lives, given to melancholy—we do not mean in its narrow and restricted sense of a mauldering, unreasonable discontent, but in the higher and loftier sense which comes from a close contemplation of humanity as a grand and gigantic failure. The objective poet turns to Nature, and she ministers to him with loving hands: she smiles benignantly upon him, and his song bears generally the happy impress of her influence. The subjective poet considers the constitution of the individual soul; its capabilities, its aspirations, its confined limits, and its relations to the infinite; and the result is frequently to tinge all his work with sadness. But as the wings of his genius become stronger this sadness may disappear; or, at any rate, may lose all that side of it which is scarcely worthy of the deep-thinking mind. It does not always depart; sometimes it leaves remnants behind which, when fostered, as in the case of Byron, for instance (notwithstanding his splendid gifts), turn into misanthropy. There never was a poet yet, we would

venture to say, who did not feel the hollowness, the unsatisfying nature of things; but the mark of the real, the strong poet, is that he does not allow this feeling to become master of his soul, thus enervating his best energies. Sooner or later he rises to the higher dignity of being able to contemplate misery with not less sad but more understanding eyes, and by the aid of his genius he desires, and attempts, to supply its antidote. Surely the poet could have no nobler work or one that could so conclusively stamp him, when rightly understood, as the ambassador from the Divine.

Turning now to the volume upon which we are more particularly concerned to dwell, it is interesting to find that Mr. Warren's talents have been ripening in the interim since his last appearance. It was easy to predicate that this would be so, and the result is indubitable. If the world has not lost its taste for what is really admirable in style, these new poems must afford it real delight. They show the richness of the author's genius to perfection. The thoughts are fine and finely expressed. In the matter of setting, alone, the writer is one of the most perfect artificers at present living. There may be a ring occasionally here and there which indicates in what school of poets he has graduated, but, on the whole, this influence is rapidly disappearing and he is standing forth entirely on his own basis, and chanting his own music. There is nothing of the ruggedness to be met with in Browning or Walt Whitman, but neither, on the other hand, are the ease and smoothness of his verse traceable to the influence of the Laureate, who has been instrumental in the moulding of so many of our young poets. The volume opens with "The Defeat of Glory," written in stanzas of a favourite metre. Glory is represented in the guise of a king, who lies with dull orbs in his stately chamber, "in dim eclipse of human power." Then we have the following imaginative lines:—

"The couch of death is glorious where he lies;
Its silver canopies forbid the rays.
Sun, shine not on his pillow till he dies,—
Time's tyrant once, and emperor of days!

Though all his precinct glitter to its roof,
Though regal the surroundings of his end,
No palace-floors are ever phantom-proof
When shadows of a greater King ascend.

The pale hours of the dawning at his bed
Bend each in turn to pity him and pass,
Who drave his hook in nations. Now, instead,
Moans are the only edicts that he has."

The reference to the power of Death here is especially happy. The poem then proceeds in the form of an exordium to the expiring monarch, but afterwards changes in form, without, however, losing any of its power. In graphic touches is depicted the course of those

who have been "waiters" upon greatness in various ways, and who are now becoming impatient as the sceptre, which Glory hitherto held so firmly, threatens to pass from his enfeebled grasp. "Is it worth a loaf, a leaf, one feather, to be king?" is the question asked as, after the surfeit of life and all its pleasures, the hold upon earth comes to be relaxed. The poem closes with a soliloquy supposed to have been spoken by the potentate himself during the past years of his magnificence and fruition, when all seemed well and secure with him :—

- "All spirits, bond and free, are mine to use ;
 I make all seasons sweet to my desire.
 And when the hard frost lies where lay soft dews,
 In every winter-house a cedar fire
- 'Lends gracious heat : you would not guess the year
 That pushes icy shoulders at the doors
 Of poor men's huts. A land of bloom is here
 Weaving an ample summer on my floors.
- 'Against the ruddy lamp of my renown,
 As some great Pharos light in stormy heaven,
 The lesser princedoms shatter, wildly blown,
 And rend their helmless realms, as foam is riven.
- 'I am set for God, to rivet or unwind,
 To establish or remove at my decree.
 I alter and abolish, break or bind ;
 Shall any power perplex my deity ?
- 'I am for ever ; no decay makes wan
 The eternal crown that gleams against my brow.
 Death is my bondsman, Pain my wage-woman,
 Age is at league with me.' Behold thee now !"

The whole scope of this poem is lofty, and the writing is equal to the conception, but the three words of the poet at the conclusion, however emphatic, are scarcely adequate to convey to the mind of the general reader all that they are meant to embody. The author abruptly closes his vision with the brief expression given. It has been said that in treating of supernatural things the poet should always preserve an air of mystery, and yet at the same time be picturesque, definite, in the presentation of his images. Both these conditions Mr. Warren fulfils. With the glamour of the palace and the half-shadowy, half-real personification of Glory, we also get very definite accessories which give to the entire conception a positive and sufficient substantiality of interest. "The Bird of my Love," is a sweet conceit in dainty verse, which is followed by a somewhat unpleasant choice of subject entitled, "A Middle Class Tragedy." It is one of those stories which occasionally crop up in Society, but which are generally considered unsuitable themes for the poet's pen. It relates here to the betrayal of a clerk's wife by a great nobleman,

and the subsequent casting forth of the handsome toy upon the world. It is told with great force, and yet with a delicacy which one would have imagined it had been almost impossible to exhibit from the nature of the task set before the narrator. Of course, there is no reason why such subjects should not be dealt with and rendered very forcible: the danger is not in the subject but in the treatment; here it has been successfully grappled with.

Mr. Warren loves Nature, and has a happy facility in drawing from her inexhaustible resources. But a great deal of this comes from his observant eye. Many of his pages are full of allusions to the beautiful in flower, in rock, in dell, in field, and in ocean. He communes with the Great Mother because he loves her: hence his pages exhibit no barrenness of similes which shall assist to enforce his thoughts and cause them to be remembered in the minds of his readers. One of the most successful poems in the present volume will serve to show the author's acquaintanceship with natural objects, and his power to turn them to account. It is called "An Ocean Grave," and strikes us as being very beautiful, and is remarkable too for the way in which it seems to beget in us as we read it a feeling of melancholy similar to that which moved him whose lament it is supposed to be. After a description of the grave by the ocean in which his Love lies buried, the mourner proceeds with his threnody:—

"I would not change my sorrow sweet
For others' nuptial hours;
I love the daisies at thy feet
More than their orange flowers.

Let snowdrops early in the year
Droop o'er her silent breast;
And bid the later cowslip rear
The amber of its crest.

Come hither, linnets tufted-red,
Drift by, O wailing tern;
Set pure vale-lilies at her head,
At her feet lady-fern.

Grow, samphire, at the tidal brink,
Wave, pansies of the shore,
To whisper how alone I think
Of her for evermore.

Bring blue sea-hollies, thorny, keen,
Long lavender in flower;
Grey wormwood like a hoary queen,
Stanch mullein like a tower.

O sea-wall mounded long and low,
Let iron bounds be thine;
Nor let the salt wave overflow
That breast I held divine.

Though cold her pale lips to reward
With love's own mysteries,
Ah, rob no daisy from her sward,
Rough gale of eastern seas!

Ah, render sere no silken bent
That by her head-stone waves;
Let noon and golden summer blent
Pervade these ocean graves.

And, ah, dear heart, in thy still nest,
Resign this earth of woes,
Forget the ardours of the west,
Neglect the morning glows.

Sleep and forget all things but one,
Heard in each wave of sea,—
How lonely all the years will run
Until I rest by thee."

We think it will be admitted that there is a very keen sympathy in these verses between the writer and the subject and circumstances which he endeavours to depict. There is that faculty in full manifestation which gives the poet pre-eminence over other men—the faculty of seeing into the depths of things and of interpreting the secretest thoughts of nature and the human soul. In the very next poem to that from which we have just quoted, there is further evidence afforded towards the establishment of our point. The lines on Ophelia are significant for their tenderness and their beauty. There is an excellent fitness, too, or adaptation of the metre to the subject, which helps the general effect. Mr. Warren naturally turns to subjects which have pathos in them. By far the majority of his poems deal with no vulgar happiness—sometimes they speak of a profound joy, but nearly all have a bearing upon the sorrows of human life. It is the peculiarity of his genius. It clings to what is sad, yet draws thence many thoughts of beauty, and, when rightly understood, also of hopefulness. The sad poet need not be misanthropical. The latter quality belongs to those men who suffer simply from intellectual or moral bile. It is not that they feel for the world's sorrow, or have a keen appreciation of its unsatisfied cravings, but rather that they are discontented with everything without having an intelligible reason for it. There were many of these who professed to be profoundly affected by Byron; they imitated his sorrows and his wailings, and even his personal appearance. They rushed into long collars and left their hair to grow long and dishevelled, imagining that they had thereby attained to two of the qualifications of the poet. A quantity of verse was thrown forth upon society which by no means pointed to deep mental suffering, but rather to indigestion. It was as if a heavy nightmare had afflicted the poets, and their verses, instead of eliciting sympathy for their supposed melancholy, only produced a feeling of

profound contempt. Now wherever, on the contrary, the poet and his works are tinged with a real sadness, the world is sure to be the better for the song, and it will welcome it even in spite of its sombreness. We do not always want to be laughing, if we do not always wish to weep. But the saddest genius of our own time is not only the most powerful but gives also the most pleasure and the most profit. Do not let it be imagined, then, that we would turn away from what comes to us in the most serious and pathetic form. We welcome these latest effusions of Mr. Warren, and, in attempting to gauge their spirit, are rather attracted than repelled by their tearful burden. The poem "Separated Fortunes" (to pursue our notice of the volume) traverses much of the ground of "Locksley Hall," though it is restricted in length, and there are some new ideas which pertain to the later poet alone. The sweet, sensitive spirit of a loving woman has been united with the lot of one who is gross and has no understanding of the treasure he possesses. The old lover has to lament; seas divide him from his love, and he tells her that the separation must be endured till the end. The years will rust themselves away, and then upon her "spirit weary for the night sleep shall unroll the prison-doors of day." The story, it will be perceived, is by no means a new one, though a new grace is given to it by its treatment.

We now come to another class of effort on the part of the author, viz., two or three poems of a somewhat larger scope, and written in blank verse. "The Cardinal's Lament" is a soliloquy supposed to be spoken on Easter Day, 1872, at Rome; and we can only express our astonishment that it should have been found necessary to state in a footnote that the sentiments given utterance to are not those of Mr. Warren but of the Cardinal. Yet some critics, it appears, have assumed that the opinions in this monologue were those of the author. Many of the lines are exceedingly forcible. Take this for instance, as part of the lament of the Cardinal:—

"Ah, spare us many Easters like this last;
For now the ungodly chide at us, and say,
We have no Christ this Easter to arise,
We watch corruption by some common grave,
Our Christ is in the ground, he will not hear;
We are dreamers, how in some old fabled tale
A good man died unjustly, lay in earth,
How soldiers sealed the cavern of his rest;
How lovely dawned that Easter, when of old
The Galilean women came to weep,
Loving the gentle prophet that was gone.
So far the tale is credible: but now
We hear of certain angels, when indeed
Philosophy has settled there were none.
We hear of how the cold dead Christ arose—
But one wise Frenchman wrote a pretty book,
And proved that dead men always fell to dust."

And so on. The entire poem is a fine piece of sarcasm mingled with a vivid representation of the feeling of regret. The Cardinal attempts to grapple with the intellectual and spiritual doubt of the age, but all the substance of his arguments lies in the assertion that there cannot be "a reasonable Faith." Thus, the old superstition which has been in vogue for so many centuries is once more called into requisition. But the intellect of the ancient dogmatic church (the Church of Rome) is conscious that it is being left behind; its nature is not so devout as that of many of the honest doubters of the time. When asked for reasons it raves, dogma supplants understanding, blind bigotry usurps the position of sincere faith, and when the old form of Roman Catholicism, or Ultramontaniam as it is now called, is asked for the intelligible supports on which it is based, the only answer it can give is in the childish words of the Cardinal introduced to us by Mr. Warren—which views are already beginning to fail to satisfy the really thinking Roman Catholic mind:—

"Ye turn

And answer, 'Show us God and it's enough.'

Lo, Peter's chair, and God in flesh thereon!"

"Medea: a Tragedy of Jealousy" strikes us as being less happy than the Lament, but there are many vigorous passages to be found in it, and the central idea, the great passion of Medea, is well delineated. The story is simple, and of course is well known to all students of classic literature. Medea upbraids Jason, the king, for his infidelity in preferring the captive Corinthian girl to herself. All the forms in which feminine jealousy depicts itself are well preserved, and the attractions of the favourite are furiously discounted by the enraged queen. She is not meet to be a hero's wife, says the real spouse; she cannot come near it: slave or concubine she may be, but no wife. And then she breaks out into this piece of genuine pathos in an impassioned address to her husband:—

"Though I lose

Thy presence day by day, and evermore

Thou makest any pretext to begone—

Still let me nurse once more my child to rest,

As in old days beside thee; one swift hour

Endure me; make pretence that all is well,

Lest the child suffer; sit with me a little

Just now and then. I am old, I know, and faded,

I never had much youth! Our years have been

So stormy; husband, how you loved me then!

How sweet it was to tread the brinks of death,

One will between us. O we went so firmly:

I felt thy hand upon my hand, and fear

Became a laughter. Through the smoke of death,

The dragon land, the fiery deeps of blood,

I saw one face—my husband's—and went on,

As though I felt the daisies at my feet

In meadow places under quiet woods,
 It is my glory to have been thy mate,
 Not idle, but another living brain
 Building thy throne beside thee, night and day :
 In rumours of conspiracy, in hours
 Of chidden armies, still at thy right hand
 Undaunted ; when rebellion, bolt by bolt,
 Played round our royal heads to tear us down ;
 Did I quail then ? did I seem pitiful ?
 Not so : men said, This woman is all steel ;
 But they were wrong, I was all love ; no more."

Mr. Warren has succeeded in giving a sublime touch to the wrongs of the ancient queen. He might, perhaps, have made of his subject a more elaborate dramatic poem than he has done. In fact, the basis he has laid shows that he had sufficient power over the tragic story to have constructed a more pretentious drama. This poem, in conjunction with one or two others in the volume which could be cited, afford ample justification for the poet in dealing with lofty subjects in a dramatic form. His minor poems are excellent, but they do not do him full justice in showing to what heights his art may carry him. He has given ample evidence that he is capable of more sustained effort than he has delighted us with in his last work ; and it is to be hoped that he will not deprive us of that which he is well able to perform. His genius is strong enough to deal with such subjects as "Philoctetes" with even greater facility and richness than he exhibited in that excellent work. His power of thinking is not weakened, or exhausted, as is too often the case with young poets ; on the contrary, his thought is stronger, and has more body in it. He is not one of those who launch upon the literary career with a few ideas, and whose poetic stock-in-trade is soon exhausted. There is the fruitfulness of genius in him ; that power of reproduction which we behold in the world in so many ways—the originative power. We perceive no signs whatever as yet that his vein is worked out, and after a man has produced three or four volumes of poems, all of a different character, and yet all thoroughly original and pregnant with thought, there is every room for confidence that he is intended to leave his mark upon the age.

The last of the poems, in blank verse, with any pretensions, to which we are desirous of calling attention, is one entitled "Jael." It deals with the powerfully dramatic story of Holy Writ, and as a composition ranks in merit with any of the pieces in the volume. After the hymn of victory is done, and Jael is alone, she ruminates as to the real effect of the great historic deed she has perpetrated. She has read in the looks of those whom she has met the supreme disdain which they entertain for her, and she renders their silent but eloquent scorn into this :—

"Better to be as we are, earth and dust,
 Than to endure, as Jael shall live on,

In self-contempt more bitter than the grave.
 Live on and pine in long remorseful years.
 Terrible tears are sequel to this deed;
 Beat on thy breast, have ashes in thy hair,
 Still shalt thou bear about in all thy dreams
 One image, one reproach, one face, one fear,
 Live, Jael, live. We shall be well revenged."

Can time efface a deed so wholly vile?
 She stood, the mother-snake, before her tent,
 She feigned a piteous dew in her false eyes.
 She made her low voice gentle as a bird's.
 Her one hand beckoned to the fugitive,
 Her other felt along the poniard's edge
 Hid near the breast where late her baby fed.
 She drew the noble weary captain in;
 Her guest beneath the shelter of her home,
 He laid him down to rest and had no fear.
 The sacred old alliance with her clan,
 The trustful calm immunity of sleep,
 Sealing security each more secure.
 Ah, surely, he was safe if anywhere
 Beneath the mantle which she laid on him.
 He was too noble to mistrust her much;
 His fading sense felt her insidious arm
 Folding him warmly. Then he slept—she rose,
 Slid like a snake across the tent—struck twice—
 And stung him dead."

This extract is a fair representation of Mr. Warren's blank verse, which will be perceived to be beyond the generality. He is complete master of the measure, and can wield it to advantage. In addition to this, it is a good medium for the exhibition of his talent, which is capable of translating its thoughts into a massive form. He has a considerable dramatic as well as descriptive faculty, and blank verse is well adapted to poetry of his order. The smallest of his poems bears witness to this possession of the dramatic element. We should like to have quoted from his "Two Old Kings: a Sketch after Kaulbach," which not only further attests the point just referred to but exhibits real pathos. Two ancient kings and comrades hold high wassail in a castle on the Rhine, and as the midnight hours draw on one recounts the story of their lives. Bitterness and disappointment have been written on their earlier years: now they endeavour to cheer each other, and as the morning breaks in the East the fine old warriors drink to their next meeting, the next banquet, however, being held in Heaven. One more quotation we must make, and it shall be from the "Ode to the Sun."

"Thou sayest—I have no lot or hand in slumber;
 I am Light, supreme.
 My robes of glory quench the planet number,
 As Day pales Dream."

A POET OF TO-DAY.

In grass-land shall arise a sound of heifers,
 A voice of herds;
 I bathe my glowing hands in breathing zephyrs,
 I call the birds.

In ripple and perfume and deep breezy lustre
 My flame feet tread;
 My girdle sprinkles moons in many a cluster,
 As sand is shed.

I am the gates of life. My dawn is burning
 With foam of stars,
 Bright as the margin of a wave returning
 In reflux bars.

The planets veil their burning faces near me;
 The green world's ends
 Flash up through miles of ether that uprear me;
 Pale vapour blends

In underneath, unfolds itself or closes,
 Divides, dilates;
 The Sea, my pathway, spreads her deep with roses
 To my red gates."

We hold that the poet who can write like this need not despair. The only danger to which he is exposed is too great a devotion to the picturesque, as in the above lines, which if pursued to excess may lead to a diminution of strength. Colour is an excellent thing, but if an artist or a poet lays himself out specially to create great effects by its aid, the chances are that his form and depth will be to some extent impaired. Do not let it be understood, however, that any such result is perceptible in the present volume. It is not only rich in colour but possesses great breadth and vigour. We would impress upon Mr. Warren that after these several successful essays in verse, he might fairly take a bolder flight and produce a still greater and more ambitious work. Not only do we now congratulate him on his latest production because of its intrinsic value, but because it is one of those volumes which must materially assist in elevating the whole tone of current poetry. It has fine conception, high finish, and appeals to what is best and purest both as regards the intellect and the spirit.

GEORGE BARNETT SMITH.

THE WEATHER AND THE SUN.

THERE are few scientific questions of greater interest than the inquiry whether it is possible to find a means of predicting the weather for a long time in advance. In former ages many attempts were made to solve this problem by a reference to the motions of the heavenly bodies. Other methods of prediction were, indeed, in vogue; but I am not here considering ordinary weather portents, or mere scientific schemes for anticipating the weather of two or three coming days: and with a few trifling exceptions, depending on observations of plants and animals, it is the case that the only wide rules for predicting weather were based on the motions of the sun and moon, the planets and the stars. It must be remembered that even astronomers of repute placed faith, until quite recent years, in the seemingly absurd tenets of judicial astrology. We cannot greatly wonder, therefore, if the more reasonable thesis that the heavenly bodies determine weather changes, was regarded with favour. Accordingly we find Horrocks, more than two centuries ago, drawing the distinction here indicated, where he says that in anticipating "storm and tempest" from a conjunction of Mercury with the Sun, he coincides "with the opinion of the astrologers, but in other respects despises their more puerile vanities." We find Bacon in like manner remarking that "all the planets have their summer and winter, wherein they dart their rays stronger or weaker, according to their perpendicular or oblique direction." He says, however, that "the commixtures of the rays of the fixed stars with one another are of use in contemplating the fabric of the world and the nature of the subjacent regions, but in no respect for predictions." Bacon remarks again that reasonable astrology (*Astrologia sana*) "should take into account the apogees and perigees of the planets, with a proper inquiry into what the vigour of planets may perform of itself; for a planet is more brisk in its apogee, but more communicative in its perigee: it should include, also, all the other accidents of the planets' motions, their accelerations, retardations, courses, stations, retrogradations, distances from the sun, increase and diminution of light, eclipses, &c.; for all these things affect the rays of the planets, and cause them to act either weaker or stronger, or in a different manner."

It is a remarkable circumstance that systems of weather prediction based on such considerations were not quickly exploded owing to their failure when tested by experience. Yet singularly enough it has scarcely ever happened that any wide system of interpretation

has been devised, which has not been regarded with favour by its inventor long after it had been in reality disproved by repeated instances of failure. This remark applies to recent systems as well as to those invented in earlier times. Within the last twenty years, for example, methods of prediction based on the moon's movements, on the conjunctions of the planets, and on other relations, have been maintained with astonishing perseverance and constancy, in the face of what outsiders cannot but regard as a most discouraging want of agreement between the predicted weather and the actual progress of events. Here, as in so many cases of prediction, we find the justice of Bacon's aphorism, "Men mark when they hit, and never mark when they miss."

It is noteworthy, indeed, that the very circumstance which appears to present a fatal objection to all schemes of prediction based on the motions of the celestial bodies, supplies the means of imagining that predictions have been fulfilled. The objection I refer to is this,—we know that the weather is seldom alike over very wide regions, while nevertheless the celestial bodies present the same aspect towards the whole extent of such regions, or an aspect so nearly the same as to suggest that the same conditions of weather should prevail if the weather really depended on the position of the heavenly bodies. It appears, then, that the inventor of a really trustworthy system must have a distinct scheme for each part of every continent,—nay, of every country, if not of every county. This objection is not taken into account, however, by the inventors of systems, while the fact on which it depends affords the means of showing that each prediction has been fulfilled. Thus, suppose "bad weather and much wind" have been predicted on a certain day, and that day is particularly fine and calm in London. If this were urged as an objection to the soundness of the system, the answer would run somewhat on this wise—"Unquestionably it was fine in London, but in North Scotland (or in France, or Spain, or Italy, as the case may be) there was very gloomy weather, and in Ireland (suppose) quite strong winds are reported to have prevailed in the afternoon." The readiness with which men satisfy themselves in such cases, corresponds with that mischievous ingenuity wherewith foolish persons satisfy themselves that a fortune-teller had foretold the truth, that a dream had been fulfilled, a superstition justified, and so forth.

The tendency, at present, amongst those who are desirous of forming a scheme of weather prediction, is to seek the origin of our weather-changes in changes of the sun's condition, and by determining the laws of the solar changes to ascertain the laws which regulate changes in the weather.

It may be remarked, in passing, that this new phase of the inquiry does not reject planetary influences altogether. The theory is entertained by many well-known students of science that changes in the

condition of the sun are dependent on the varying positions of the planets ; so that if it should be established that our weather-changes are connected with solar changes, we should infer that indirectly the planets in their motions rule the weather on our earth.

I propose now to consider the evidence relating to the sun's influence, and to discuss the question (altogether distinct, be it remarked) whether a means of accurate weather prediction may be obtained if the sun's influence be regarded as demonstrated.

There is one strong point in favour of the new theory, in the fact that the sun is unquestionably the prime cause of all weather changes. To quote the words of Lieut.-Colonel Strange, an enthusiastic advocate of the theory (and eager to have it tested at this country's charge), "there can hardly be a doubt that almost every natural phenomenon connected with climate can be distinctly traced to the sun as the great dominating force, and it is a natural inference" (though not, as he says, an unavoidable one) "that the changes, and what we now call the uncertainties of climate are connected with the constant fluctuations which we know to be perpetually occurring in the sun itself." I may proceed, indeed, in this place, to quote the following words in which Colonel Strange enunciates the theory itself which I am about to discuss, and its consequences :—"The bearing of climatic changes on a vast array of problems connected with navigation, agriculture, and health, need but be mentioned to show the importance of seeking in the sun, where they doubtless reside, for the causes which govern these changes. It is indeed my conviction that of all the fields now open for scientific cultivation, there is not one which, quite apart from its transcendent philosophical interest, promises results of such high utilitarian value, as the exhaustive systematic study of the sun."

It cannot be doubted, I think, that if anything like what is here promised could be hoped for from the study of the sun, it would be a matter of more than national importance to undertake the task indicated by Colonel Strange. The expense of new observatories for this special subject of study would in that case be very fully repaid. It would be worth while to employ the most skilful astronomers at salaries comparable with those which are paid to our Government ministers ; it would be well to secure on corresponding terms the advice of those most competent to decide on the instrumental requirements of the case ; and in fact the value of the work which is at present accomplished at Greenwich, great though that value is, would sink into utter insignificance, in my judgment, compared with the results flowing in the supposed case from the proposed "exhaustive and systematic study" of the great central luminary of the planetary system.

The subject we are to discuss is manifestly therefore of the utmost importance, and cannot be too carefully dealt with. It

would be a misfortune on the one hand to be led by careless reasoning to underestimate the chances in favour of the proposed scheme, while on the other it would be most mischievous to entertain unfounded expectations where the necessary experiments must be of a costly nature, and where science would be grievously discredited should it be proved that the whole scheme was illusory.

We note, first, that besides being "the great dominating force" to which all natural phenomena connected with climate are due, the sun has special influence on all the most noteworthy *variations* of weather. The seasons are due to solar influence; and here we have an instance of a power of prediction derived from solar study, though belonging to a date so remote that we are apt to forget the fact. It seems so obvious that summer will be on the whole warmer than winter, that we overlook the circumstance that at some epoch or other this fact, at least in its relation to the apparent motions of the sun, must have been recognised as a discovery. Men must at one time have learned, or perhaps we should rather say, each race of men must at one time have noticed, that the varying warmth on which the processes of vegetation depend, correspond with the varying diurnal course of the sun. So soon as this was noticed, and so soon as the periodic nature of the sun's varying motions had been ascertained, men had acquired in effect the power of predicting that at particular times or seasons, the weather on the whole would be warmer than at other seasons. In other words, so soon as men had recognised the period we call the *year*, they could predict that one half of each year would be warmer than the other half. Simple as this fact may seem, it is important to notice it as the beginning of weather prediction; for as will presently appear, it has an important bearing on the more complex questions at present involved in the prognostication of weather-changes.

It became manifest almost as soon as this discovery had been made, that the weather of particular days or even of weeks and longer periods could not, by its means, be predicted. A week in summer may be cold, and a week in winter may be warm; nor, so far as is even yet known, is there a single part of any year the temperature of which can be certainly depended upon, at least within the temperate zone. In certain tropical regions there are tolerably constant weather variations; but so far is this from being the case in the temperate zones of either hemisphere, that it is impossible to affirm certainly, even that during a week or fortnight at any given summer season there will be one hot day, or that during a corresponding period in winter there will be one day of cold weather.

It became manifest also, at an early epoch, that terrestrial conditions must be intimately involved in all questions of weather, since the year in different countries in the same latitudes presents different features. Such differences are of two kinds,—those which have a ten-

dency to be constant, and those which are in their nature variable. For example, the annual weather in Canadian regions having the same range of latitude as Great Britain, differs always to a very marked degree, though not always to the same degree, from that which prevails in this country: here then we have a case of a constant difference due unquestionably to terrestrial relations. Again, when we have a hot or dry summer in this country, warm or damp weather may prevail in other countries in the same latitudes, and *vice versa*; differences of this kind are ordinarily * variable, and in the present position of weather-science are regarded as accidental.

Hitherto, weather-science has depended solely on the study of these terrestrial effects as they vary under varying conditions. Modern meteorological research is confined to the record and study of the actual condition of the weather from day to day at selected stations in different countries. It cannot be denied that the inquiry has not been attended with success. At vast expense millions of records of heat, rainfall, winds, clouds, barometric pressure, and so on have been secured; but hitherto no law has been recognised in the variations thus recorded,—no law at least from which any constant system of prediction for long periods in advance can be deduced.

On this point I shall quote first a remarkable saying of Sir W. Herschel's, which appears to me, like many such sayings of his, to be only too applicable to the present state of science. In endeavouring to interpret the laws of weather, "we are in the position," Herschel remarks, "of a man who hears at intervals a few fragments of a long history related in a prosy, unmethodical manner. A host of circumstances omitted or forgotten, and the want of connection between the parts, prevents the hearer from obtaining possession of the entire history. Were he allowed to interrupt the narrator, and ask him to explain the apparent contradictions, or to clear up doubts at obscure points, he might hope to arrive at a general view. The questions that we would address to nature, are the very experiments of which we are deprived in the science of meteorology."

The late Professor De Morgan, indeed, selected meteorology as the

* I use this qualifying word, because some differences of the kind are more or less regular. Thus, when there is a dry summer in certain regions in the West of Europe, there is commonly a wet summer in easterly regions in the same latitude, and *vice versa*, the difference simply depending on the height at which the clouds travel which are brought by the south-westerly counter-trade winds. When these clouds travel high, they do not give up their moisture until they have travelled far inland or towards the east; when they travel low, their moisture is condensed so soon as they reach the western landslopes. It is not uncommonly the case again, that when we in England have dry summers, much rain falls on the Atlantic, and our drought is simply due to the fall of this rain before the clouds from the south-west have reached us. More commonly, however, drought in England is due to the delay of the downfall, in consequence of the clouds from the south-west travelling at a greater height than usual.

subject on which, above all others, systematic observations had been most completely wasted,—as a special instance of the failure of the true Baconian method (which be it noticed is not, as is so commonly supposed, the modern scientific method). “There is an attempt at induction going on,” says De Morgan, “which has yielded little or no fruit, the observations made in the meteorological observatories. This attempt is carried on in a manner which would have caused Bacon to dance for joy” (query); “for he lived in times when Chancellors did dance. Russia, says M. Biot, is covered by an army of meteorographs, with generals, high officers, subalterns, and privates, with fixed and defined duties of observation. Other countries, also, have their systematic observations. And what has come of it? Nothing, says M. Biot, and nothing will ever come of it: the veteran mathematician and experimental philosopher declares, as does Mr. Ellis” (Bacon’s biographer), “that no single branch of science has ever been fruitfully explored in this way.” A special interest attaches, I may remark, to the opinion of M. Biot, because it was given upon the proposal of the French government to construct meteorological observatories in Algeria.

It is well known that our Astronomer Royal holds a similar opinion. De Morgan thus quaintly indicates his interpretation of one particular expression of Sir G. Airy’s opinion:—“In the report to the Greenwich Board of Visitors, for 1867, the Astronomer Royal, speaking of the increase of meteorological observatories, remarks, ‘Whether the effect of this movement will be that millions of useless observations will be added to the millions that already exist, or whether something may be expected to result which will lead to a meteorological theory, I cannot hazard a conjecture?’ This is a conjecture, and a very obvious one; if Mr. Airy would have given $2\frac{3}{4}d.$, for the chance of a meteorological theory formed by masses of observations, he would never have said what I have quoted.”

The simple combination of terrestrial considerations with the effects due to the sun’s varying daily path having thus far failed to afford any interpretation of the varying weather from year to year, it is natural to inquire whether the variations in the sun’s condition from year to year may not supply the required means of interpreting and hence of predicting weather-changes. We know that the sun’s condition does vary, because we sometimes see many large spots upon his surface, whereas at others he has no spots, or few and small ones. We can scarcely doubt that these variations affect the supply of heat and light, as well as of chemical action and possibly of other forms of force; and hence we are certainly dealing with a *vera causa*, though whether this real cause be an efficient cause of weather-changes remains yet to be determined.

It may perhaps be as well to inquire, however, in the first place, whether any peculiarities of weather can be traced to another cir-

cumstance which ought to be at least as efficient, one would suppose, as any changes in the sun's action due to the spots. I refer to his varying distance from the earth. It is known doubtless to all my readers that in June and July, although these are our summer months, the sun is farther away than in December,—and this, not by an inconsiderable distance, but by more than three millions of miles. Accordingly, on a summer day in our hemisphere we receive much less heat than is received on a summer day in the southern hemisphere. Or instead of comparing our summer heat with summer heat in the southern hemisphere, we may make comparison between the quantity of heat received by the whole earth on a day in June and on a day in December. Either way of viewing the matter is instructive; and I believe many of my readers will be surprised when they hear what is the actual amount of difference.

We receive in fact, on June 30th, less heat and light than dwellers at our antipodes receive on December 30th, by the amount which would be lost if an opaque disc having a diameter equal to one-fourth of the sun's,* came upon the sun's face as seen on December 30 at our antipodes. It need hardly be said that no spots whose effects would be comparable with those produced by such a disc of blackness have ever been seen upon the face of the sun. Spots are not black or nearly black, even in their very nucleus. The largest ever seen has not had an extent approaching that of our imagined black disc, even when the whole dimensions of the spot,—nucleus, umbra, and penumbra,—have been taken into account. Moreover, all round a spot there is always a region of increased brightness, making up to a great degree, if not altogether, for the darkness of the spot itself. So that unquestionably the summer heat in the southern hemisphere exceeds the summer heat in our hemisphere to a much more marked degree than the heat given out by the sun when he is without spots exceeds the heat of a spotted sun.

It is, however, rather difficult to ascertain what effect is to be ascribed to this peculiarity. It is certain that the Australian summer differs in several important respects from the European summer; but it is not easy to say how much of the difference is due to the peculiarity we have been considering, and how much to the characteristic distinction between the northern and southern halves of the earth,—the great excess of water surface over land surface in the southern hemisphere. It is worthy of notice,

* It is easily shown that such would be the size of the imagined black disc. For the sun's distance varies from about 93 millions of miles to about 90 millions, or in the proportion of 31 to 30. Hence the size of his disc varies in the proportion of 31 times 31 to 30 times 30, or as 961 to 900. The defect of the latter number 900 amounts to 61, which is about a sixteenth part of the larger number. But a black disc having a diameter equal to a quarter of the sun's would cut off precisely a sixteenth part of his light and heat, which was the fact to be proved.

however, that even in this case, where we cannot doubt that a great difference must exist in the solar action at particular seasons, we find ourselves quite unable to recognise any peculiarities of weather as *certainly* due to this difference.

I have spoken of a second way of viewing the difference in question, by considering it as it affects the whole earth. The result is sufficiently surprising. It has been shown by the researches of Sir J. Herschel and Pouillet, that on the average our earth receives each day a supply of heat competent to heat an ocean 260 yards deep over the whole surface of the earth from the temperature of melting ice to the boiling point. Now, on or about June 30, the supply is one thirtieth greater, while on or about December 30, the supply is one thirtieth less. Accordingly, on June 30, the heat received in a single day would be competent only to raise an ocean $251\frac{1}{3}$ yards deep from the freezing to the boiling point, whereas on December 30 the heat received from the sun would so heat an ocean $268\frac{2}{3}$ yards deep. The mere excess of heat, therefore, on December 30, as compared with June 30, would suffice to raise an ocean more than 17 yards deep and covering the whole earth, from the freezing point to the temperature of boiling water! It will not be regarded as surprising if terrestrial effects of some importance should follow from so noteworthy an excess, not merely of light and heat, but of gravitating force, of magnetic influence, and of actinic or chemical action, exerted upon the earth as a whole. Accordingly we find that there is a recognisable increase in the activity of the earth's magnetism in December and January as compared with June and July. But assuredly the effect produced is not of such a character as to suggest that we should find the means of predicting weather *if* it were possible for us *now* to discover any solar law of change resulting in a corresponding variation of solar action upon the earth.

This leads us to consider the first great law of solar change as distinguished from systematic variations like the sun's varying change of distance and his varying daily path on the heavens. This law is that which regulates the increase and decrease of the solar spots within a period of about eleven years. The sun's condition does not, indeed, admit of being certainly predicted by this law, since it not unfrequently happens that the sun shows few spots for several weeks together, in the very height of the time of spot-frequency, while on the other hand it often happens that many and large spots are seen at other times. Nevertheless, this general law holds, that, on the whole, and taking one month with another, there is a variation in spot-frequency, having for its period an interval of rather more than eleven years.

Now, the difference between a year of maximum spot-frequency, and one of minimum frequency, is very noteworthy, notwithstanding the exceptional features just mentioned, which show themselves but

for short periods. This will be manifest on the consideration of a few typical instances. Thus, in the year 1837, the sun was observed on 168 days, during which he was not once seen without spots, while no less than 333 new groups made their appearance. This was a year of maximum spot-frequency. In 1843, the sun was observed on 312 days, and on no less than 149 of these no spots could be seen, while only 34 new groups made their appearance. This was a year of minimum spot-frequency. Passing to the next maximum year, we find that in 1848 the sun was observed on 278 days, during which he was never seen without spots, while 330 new spots made their appearance. In 1855 and 1856 together, he was observed on 634 days, on 239 of which he was without spots, while only 62 new groups made their appearance. The next maximum was not so marked as usual, that is, there was not so definite a summit, if one may so speak, to the wave of increase; but the excess of spot-frequency was none the less decided. Thus, in the four years, 1858, '59, '60, '61, the sun was observed on 335, 343, 333, and 322 days, *on not one of which he was spotless*, while the numbers of new groups for these four years were, respectively, 202, 205, 211, and 204. The minimum in 1867 was very marked, as 195 days out of 312 were without spots, and only 25 new groups appeared. The increase after 1867 was unusually rapid, since in 1869 there were no spotless days, and 224 new groups were seen, though the sun was only observed on 196 days. The number of spots in 1870, 1871, and 1872, as well as their magnitude and duration, have been above what is usual, even at the period of maximum spot-frequency.

From all this it will be manifest that we have a well-marked peculiarity to deal with, though not one of perfect uniformity. Next to the systematic changes already considered, this alternate waxing and waning of spot-frequency might be expected to be efficient in producing recognisable weather changes. Assuredly, if this should not appear to be the case, we should have to dismiss all idea that the sun-spots are weather-rulers.

Now, from the first discovery of spots, it was recognised that they must, in all probability, affect our weather to some degree. It was noticed, indeed, that our auroras seemed to be in some way influenced by the condition of the sun's surface, since they were observed to be more numerous when there are many spots than when there are few or none. Singularly enough, the effect of the spots on temperature was not only inquired into much later (for we owe to Cassini and Mairan the observation relating to auroras), but was expected to be of an opposite character from that which is in reality produced. Sir W. Herschel formed the opinion that when there are most spots the sun gives out most heat, notwithstanding the diminution of light where the spots are. He sought for evidence on this point in the price of corn in England, and it actually appeared, though by a mere

coincidence, that corn had been cheapest in years of spot-frequency, a result regarded by Herschel as implying that the weather had been warmer on the whole in those years. It was well pointed out, however, by Arago, that "in these matters we must be careful how we generalise facts before we have a very considerable number of observations at our disposal." The peculiarities of weather in a single and not extensive country like England, are quite insufficient to supply an answer to the wide question dealt with by Herschel. The weather statistics of many countries must be considered and compared. Moreover, very long periods of time must be dealt with.*

M. Gautier, of Geneva, and later MM. Arago and Barratt made a series of researches into the tabulated temperature at several stations, and for many successive years. They arrived at the conclusion that, on the whole, the weather is coolest in years of spot-frequency.

But recently the matter has been more closely scrutinised, and it has been found that the effects due to the great solar spot period, although recognisable, are by no means so obvious as had been anticipated.

These effects may be divided into three classes,—those affecting (1) temperature, (2) rainfall, and (3) terrestrial magnetism.

As respects the first, it has been discovered that when *underground* temperatures are examined, so that local and temporary causes of change are eliminated, there is a recognisable diminution of temperature in years when spots are most frequent. We owe this discovery to Professor C. P. Smyth, Astronomer Royal for Scotland. The effect is very slight; indeed, barely recognisable. I have before me, as I write, Professor Smyth's chart of the quarterly temperatures from 1837 to 1869, at depths of 3, 6, 12, and 24 French feet. Of course, the most remarkable feature even at the depth of 24 feet, is the alternate rise and fall with the seasons. But it is seen that while the range of rise and fall remains very nearly constant, the crests and troughs of the waves lie at varying levels.

* When Herschel made his researches into this subject, the law of spot-frequency had not been discovered. He would probably have found in this law, as some have since done, the explanation of the seven years of plenty and the seven years of famine typified by the fat kine and lean kine of Joseph's dream. For if there were a period of eleven years in which corn and other produce of the ground waxed and waned in productiveness, it would be not at all unlikely that whenever this waxing and waning chanced to be unusually marked, there would result two series of poor and rich years apparently ranging over fourteen instead of eleven years. We have seen, above, that the waves of spot-waxing and spot-waning are not all alike in shape and extent. Whenever then a wave more marked than usual came, we should expect to find it borrowing, so to speak, both in trough and crest, from the waves on either side. It would require but a year or so either way to make the wave range over fourteen years; and observed facts even during the last half-century only, show this to be no unlikely event.

After long and careful scrutiny, I find myself compelled to admit that I cannot find the slightest evidence in *this* chart of a connection between underground temperatures and the eleven years period of sun spots. I turn, therefore, to the chart in which the annual means are given; and noting in the means at the lesser depths "confusion worse confounded" (this, of course, is no fault of Professor Smyth's, who here merely records what had actually taken place), I take the temperatures at a depth of 24 French feet. Now, neglecting minor features, I find the waves of temperature thus arranged. They go down to a little more than $46\frac{1}{2}$ degrees of the common thermometer in 1839-40; rise to about $47\frac{3}{4}$ degrees in 1847; sink to $47\frac{1}{4}$ degrees in 1849; mount nearly to $47\frac{3}{4}$ degrees again in 1852-53; are at 47 degrees in 1856-57; are nearly at 48 degrees in 1858-59; then they touch 47 degrees three times (with short periods of rising between), in 1860, 1864, and 1867; and rise above $47\frac{1}{2}$ degrees in 1869. Now if we remember that there were maxima of spots in 1837, 1848, 1859-60, and 1870, while there were minima in 1843, and 1855-56, I think it will be found to require a somewhat lively imagination to recognise a very striking association between the underground temperature and the sun's condition with respect to spots. If many spots imply diminution of heat, how does it come that the temperature rises to a maximum in 1859, and again in 1869? if the reverse, how is it that there is a minimum in 1860? I turn, lastly, to the chart in which the sun-spot waves, and the temperature waves are brought into actual comparison, and I find myself utterly unable to recognise the slightest association between them. Nevertheless, I would not urge this with the desire of in any way throwing doubt upon the opinion to which Professor Smyth has been led, knowing well that the long and careful examination he has given to this subject in all its details, may have afforded ample though not obvious evidence for the conclusions at which he has arrived. I note also, that, as he points out, Mr. Stone, director of the Cape Town Observatory, and Mr. Cleveland Abbe, director of the Cincinnati Observatory, have since, "but it is believed quite independently, published similar deductions touching the earth's temperature in reference to sun-spots." All I would remark is, that the effect is very slight and very far from being obvious at a first inspection.

Next as to rainfall and wind.

Here, again, we have results which can hardly be regarded as striking, except in the forcible evidence they convey of the insignificance of the effects which are to be imputed to the great eleven-year spot period. We owe to Mr. Baxendell, of Manchester, the most complete series of investigations into this subject. He finds that at Oxford, during the years when sun-spots were most numerous, the amount of rainfall under west and south-west winds was greater than the amount under south and south-east winds while the reverse was

the case in years when spots were few and small. Applying corresponding processes to the meteorological records for St. Petersburg, he finds that a contrary state of things prevailed there. Next we have the evidence of the Rev. R. Main, director of the Radcliffe Observatory at Oxford, who finds that westerly winds are slightly more common when sun-spots are numerous than at other times. And lastly, Mr. Meldrum, of Mauritius, notes that years of spot-frequency are characterized on the whole by a greater number of storms and hurricanes, than years when the sun shows few spots.

The association between the sun-spot period and terrestrial magnetism is of a far more marked character, though I must premise that the Astronomer Royal, after careful analysis of the Greenwich magnetic records, denies the existence of any such association whatever. There is, however, a balance of evidence in its favour. It seems very nearly demonstrated that the daily sway of the magnetic needle is greatest when sun-spots are numerous, that magnetic storms are somewhat more numerous at such times, and that auroras also are more commonly seen. Now it has been almost demonstrated by M. Marié Davy, chief of the meteorological division in the Paris Observatory, that the weather is affected in a general way by magnetic disturbances. So that we are confirmed in the opinion that indirectly, if not directly, the weather is affected to some slight degree by the great sun-spot period.

Still I must point out that not one of these cases of agreement has anything like the evidence in its favour which had been found for an association between the varying distance of Jupiter and the sun-spot changes. For eight consecutive maxima and minima this association has been strongly marked, and might be viewed as demonstrated,—only it chanced unfortunately that for two other cases the relation is *precisely reversed*; and in point of fact, whereas the period now assigned to the great sun-spot wave is eleven years and rather less than *one* month, Jupiter's period of revolution is eleven years and about *ten* months, a discrepancy of nine months, which would amount up to five and a half years (or modify perfect agreement into perfect disagreement) in seven or eight cycles.

But accepting the association between weather and the sun-spot changes as demonstrated (which is granting a great deal to the believers in solar weather-prediction), have we any reason to believe that by a long-continued study of the sun the great problem of foretelling the weather can be solved? This question, as I have already pointed out, must not be hastily answered. It is one of national, nay, of cosmopolitan importance. If answered in the affirmative, there is scarcely any expense which would be too great for the work suggested; but all the more careful must we be not to answer it in the affirmative, if the true answer should be negative.

But it appears to me that so soon as the considerations dealt with

above have been fairly taken into account, there can be no possible doubt or difficulty in replying to the question. The matter has in effect, though not in intention, been tested experimentally, and the experiments, when carried out under the most favourable conditions, have altogether failed. To show that this is so, I take the position of affairs before Schwabe began that fine series of observations which ended in the discovery of the great spot-period of eleven years. Let us suppose that at that time the question had been mooted whether it might not be possible, by a careful study of the sun, to obtain some means of predicting the weather. The argument would then have run as follows:—"The sun is the great source of light and heat; that orb is liable to changes which must in all probability affect the supply of light and heat; those changes may be periodical and so predictable; and as our weather must to some extent depend on the supply of light and heat, we may thus find a means of predicting weather changes." The inquiry might then have been undertaken, and undoubtedly the great spot-period would have been detected, and with this discovery would have come that partial power of predicting the sun's condition which we now possess,—that is, the power of saying that in such and such a year, taken as a whole, spots will be numerous or the reverse. Moreover, meteorological observations conducted simultaneously would have shown that, as the original argument supposed, the quantity of heat supplied by the sun varies to a slight degree with the varying condition of the sun. Corresponding magnetic changes would be detected; and also those partial indications of a connexion between phenomena of wind and rain and the sun's condition which have been indicated above. All this would be exceedingly interesting to men of science. *But*,—supposing all this had been obtained at the nation's expense, and the promise had been held out that the means of predicting weather would be the reward, the non-scientific tax-paying community might not improbably inquire what was the worth of these discoveries to the nation or to the world at large. Be it understood that I am not here using the *cui bono* argument. As a student of science, I utterly repudiate the notion that before scientific researches are undertaken, it must be shown that they will *pay*. But it is one thing to adopt this mean and contemptible view of scientific research, and quite another to countenance projects which are based *ab initio* upon the ground that they will more than repay their cost. Now, I think, if the nation made the inquiry above indicated, and under the circumstances mentioned, it would be very difficult to give a satisfactory reply. The tax-payers would say, "We have supplied so many thousands of pounds to found national observatories for the cultivation of the physics of science, and we have paid so many thousands of pounds yearly to the various students of science who have kindly given their services in the management of these observatories; let

us hear what are the utilitarian results of all this outlay? We do not want to hear of scientific discoveries, but of the promised means of predicting the weather." The answer would be, "We have found that storms in the tropics are rather more numerous in some years than others, the variations having a period of eleven years; we can assert pretty confidently that auroras follow a similar law of frequency; south-west winds blow more commonly at Oxford, but less commonly elsewhere, when the sun-spots, following the eleven-year period, are at a maximum; and more rain falls with south-westerly winds than with south-easterly winds at Oxford and elsewhere, but less at St. Petersburg and elsewhere, when sun-spots are most numerous, while the reverse holds when the spots are rare." I incline to think that on being further informed that these results related to averages only, and gave no means of predicting the weather for any given day, week, or month, even as respects the unimportant points here indicated, the British tax-payer would infer that he had thrown away his money. I imagine that the army of observers who had gathered these notable results would be disbanded rather unceremoniously, and that for some considerable time science (as connected, at any rate, with promised "utilitarian" results) would stink in the nostrils of the nation.

But this is very far, indeed, from being all. Nay, we may almost say that this is nothing. Astronomers *know* the great spot period; they have even ascertained the existence of longer and shorter periods less marked in character; and they have ascertained the laws according to which other solar features besides the spots vary in their nature. It is certain that whatever remains to be discovered must be of a vastly less marked character. If then the discovery of the most striking law of solar change has led to no results having the slightest value in connection with the problem of weather-prediction, if periodic solar changes of a less marked character have been detected which have no recognisable bearing on weather changes, what can be hoped from the recognition of solar changes still more recondite in their nature? It is incredible that the complex phenomena involved in meteorological relations regarded as a whole, those phenomena which are but just discernibly affected by the great sun-spot period, should respond to changes altogether insignificant even when compared with the development and decay of a single small sun-spot. It appears to me, therefore, that it is the duty of the true lover of science to indicate the futility of the promises which have been mistakenly held out; for it cannot be to the credit of science, or ultimately to its advantage, if government assistance be obtained on false pretences for any branch of scientific research.

RICH. A. PROCTOR.

MARGARET AND ELIZABETH.

By KATHERINE SAUNDERS,

AUTHOR OF "GIDEON'S ROCK."

CAPTAIN HECTOR BROWNE'S JOURNAL—PART VIII.

WHEN I went to 'Lizbeth's cottage, leaving Joshua in the chapel porch, I found there was company with her, at dinner; so I came back to him, and we agreed it would be better to bide our time. He soon got from me that the minister chap was one of the company, which made him quiet and unlike himself, all the time we were at our own bread-and-cheese dinner, in the garden of the Transome Arms.

We sat smoking, all the afternoon, in the little arbour, thinking much of people not far from us, and feeling dreary, and strange, and deserted, as we remembered how little they, most likely, were thinking upon us.

We agreed I was not to go to 'Lizbeth's again till the evening, at such an hour as her company would most likely be gone.

It was coming on a little dusk before Joshua would let me go. Then, just as I was starting, all his qualms came upon him again.

"I must go with you," says he. "I must see her close before she knows me. I must know just how it is with her. Look you, friend-in-need, I'll go as an old messmate of yours. I'll be anything for her not to know me while I watch her. Yes, yes; she's true as gold, I know, and gold will bear proving. Say no more, old chap; I'm coming along with you. You ask about your wife first, then do as you were going to do: tell her my story as another man's story, while I sit and hold my tongue."

It was no use gainsaying him.

We came to 'Lizbeth's cottage.

"This is well," says Josh; "there's no light but the fire; it's too dark to tell faces. Who is that in the door?"

"Hush!" I said, and we stood back behind a line of fishing-nets, where we could see and hear.

Who was it at the door? Josh knew well enough it was the minister and Elizabeth taking leave of each other.

"Michael," says she, "you are one of those who seem to take light out of the house when they depart from it. Now, do come to me again whenever you visit your sisters. Think of me as one of them, and do not pass me by. Have I your promise?"

They came out together, and we could see Elizabeth meant to go with him to the turn of the cliff, as it was her custom with any who visited her. We could not see their faces, at least only very dimly; but there was that in the sharp turn of the lad's head as she said would he think of her as one of his sisters that told poor Josh too much.

"All women are my sisters, Elizabeth Vandereck," said the young man, as they slowly went by our line of nets, "but one woman is different from all the rest—is more to me in every way, more good, more beautiful, more dear. Surely, Elizabeth, this is not merely my soul's sister, like the rest; is she not something nearer, sweeter, more necessary to my spirit? You say you were amazed and overjoyed at my discourse to-day, and others have said the same. Oh! may I not tell you and them, Elizabeth, why I have been able to speak as I have done? God gives me thoughts as rich and good at all times, but I have not power to give them to his people as He gives them to me. In the trouble of their birth from my worn brain too often they lose their beauty and have no power to keep an eye from closing, let alone a heart from sin. But to-day, oh! best beloved, my thoughts have rested in you, and have lived and kept the fragrance and beauty given by their Maker—even as flowers do in a vase of fresh water."

He went on talking till they were past our hearing. We watched them go along the beach. We saw that Elizabeth turned towards him and spoke to him; and as she did so the lad dropped his head. Then we saw that he again spoke, lifting up his head and changing his weak, lagging step to a step that was suddenly eager and strong, and his form was straight as a dart, and his white hands, one clenched and one open, striking each other in a sort of passion. Then Elizabeth drooped *her* head and hid her face in her apron, and the other went on till, all of a sudden, he clapped his hand to his side and staggered. Then both stopped, and we saw that he was sitting on the stones and she bending over him, holding her handkerchief to his mouth. I knew nothing of Joshua's feeling then. I only felt that the line on which we leaned, where the nets and jackets were hung, was being strained and dragged down under his arms.

Presently the minister rose, and Elizabeth held his arm till a person, who was evidently coming to meet him, reached the spot where they stood. Then she shook hands with him, and saw him take the arm of the man who had come up. As she dropped his hand, the minister fell upon her shoulder, and Elizabeth put her arm round him as if he had been a child, and kissed his forehead. Then they went their way, and she came homewards, slowly, with her apron to her eyes.

She had no sooner come to the place where we stood behind the nets than the line, which had been strained and strained under Joshua's weight all this time, broke, and down go the nets (our screen), and there stands Elizabeth, face to face with us.

It is me she stares at, and that first goes towards her.

"I should know that face," says she.

"If saints should know anything of sinners you should," says I.

"Hector Browne!" she cries, holding out her hands.

"If you can speak that name and hold my hand at the same time, 'Lizabeth, England is still home to me."

She looked at me, and laughed, as she shook my hand. I *knew*

then all was well with you. Meantime, Josh was standing silent as the grave behind me. So, as she said, "Come, come in," I looked over my shoulder and answered,—

"Thankee, 'Lizabeth, but my mate's a bit of a stranger in these parts, and——and scarce knows where to go."

"And where should he go, then, if he is just from sea and a stranger?" asks she, looking at Josh through the dusk; "where but to the fireside of a sailor's widow? Bring him in, Hector. The likes of him were always welcome here when my Josh was alive; and now that I have you to stand as master of the house a little while, I may surely have in who I like. Come, master, will you follow us?"

Josh bowed his head, and followed us.

Joshua Vandereck followed us into 'Lizabeth's cottage, and the room was nearly dark, and he went towards the fire and sat down in a large old elbow-chair, that used to be called his. He did this instantly, and without thinking.

I felt a little afraid as to whether it would not startle her, and stood before him, in front of the fire, as she spoke to me.

"And what's had you all this time, Hector Browne?" says she. "Have you kept away for the same reason that you went? Have you had no pity, all these many months—these nigh two years—for her that's watched for you?"

"'Lizabeth," I said, "she shall watch no more! Wait till you know all that I and my mate have gone through."

"This chap," I said, standing well in front of Joshua, as he hung down his head looking into the fire, "has been on an island long years a slave to a lot of savages. I found him there. We ran away from them together. We've gone through what would fill a hundred books. We cried at the sight of English ground, like babies born over again. We are going to find my mate's wife, 'Lizabeth. She thinks him dead; we are going to find her." And I drew her away from Josh, and spoke lower. "And my mate, he's getting afraid of finding her—afraid of how it will be with her when we do find her. She had heard that he was dead; she was a comely woman, and young. He has qualms, you see; and it's natural, 'Lizabeth. The faithfulest may be tempted sometimes. You, yourself, 'Lizabeth; you always said you'd never marry again; but I daresay even your mind's changed by this time."

"Not it, Hector," she said, moving about to spread some supper for us. And she went to the door to see if she could light on some boy to send for beer for us.

While she stood at the door with a jug in her hand, she caught sight of the stars coming out over the sea, and said,—

"You will have a fine night for your walk," and stood still looking at them.

"Speak of him—speak of him," muttered Josh.

I knew he meant the minister; but I was sore afraid of bearing too hard on even 'Lizabeth's faithful heart.

"Yes," I said, "we shall have it fine, and so will the gentleman you parted with just now, 'Lizbeth."

I thought she coloured; but it was too dark for me to be sure.

"Ah! you saw him; that was a dear friend of mine, Hector," she said; "and it is but small hope I have of ever seeing him again, unless I could——"

She stopped and lifted her apron to her eyes.

"What, 'Lizbeth?" I asked her.

"Bring my mind to do what I have told you I cannot do—marry again."

"You don't take to him enough for that then, Liz?"

"I love him dearly."

She answered so pat, I was taken aback completely. I was determined she should not be tried so far as Josh wished to try her.

"My mate makes himself at home, you see," I said, as Josh sat stooping and warming his hands at the fire. "We are put to it, Liz, to think how to break the news to his wife."

"Ah! the woman thought him dead, you say?" she asked me.

"Ay, dead these five"—a nudge from Josh—"these fifteen years well-nigh."

She gave the jug to a little fisher boy, then came in, after kissing her hand seawards, as I had seen her often do before shutting out the daylight and lighting her candle.

I knew I might safely speak of that, so I did.

"Who's that for, Liz?" I said; "the minister?"

"What?" she asked me.

I said, "You kissed your hand to somebody just now."

She came and stood between us two at the fire as we sat, and looked at me and said,—

"Do you never, as you come by a churchyard at dusk, and pass by a grave of one you loved, do you never stop and say 'Good-night'? Now, I have my husband's grave for ever at my door, and how can I help saying 'Good-morning' and 'Good-night' to him? I do it always. What does your friend suffer from? He seems in pain."

Josh was swaying as he bent down to the fire.

"I am very silly, Hector," says 'Lizbeth; "but I felt as I could hardly breathe away from the sea and him. It seems such company, you wouldn't believe. Now I was quite ashamed of myself before the children on their last birthday. When I had dressed them and made them little presents, nothing would satisfy me but I must take them while they were clean—which, you know, they never last long—I must take them down to the water's side and stand there with them, just as if he could feel glad with me at their being so well-looking and tall for their age; and we picked up a wreath of seaweed and called it father's present. The neighbours tell me I should teach 'em better; but why does it matter being silly if it gives us comfort?"

She had been speaking her last words to Josh himself. He made

a great effort to answer her, and managed to say the very last words he ought to have said.

"I see—I see!" he muttered.

'Lizbeth's eyes were on him, sharp as needles, then they turned to me with a tear in them and a smile.

"How much you are alike," says she, "all you sailors. I could have fancied——" And then she stopped to take in the beer the boy had just brought, and she said no more about us sailors being alike. But I noticed she looked his way more, and took a great deal more interest in him, since she fancied he was a little like Josh.

"You must tell me how your mate here fares, Hector," she said, as she stood turning the steaks on the fire; "if his wife is well, and how she bears the surprise, and all about it."

She looked down on his bent head, and I fancied another tear glittered in her eye.

"It will be a shock to her," she said presently; "but she will bear it."

I said, "Do you think so, 'Lizbeth?"

She looked at me and nodded.

"Do you think *you* could?" I said.

"I could what?" asked 'Lizbeth.

"Bear a shock like she will have to bear?"

"Yes; I think so," said 'Lizbeth; "but I don't know," she said, laying down her fork, and putting both hands to her head, "it would seem as if the world was turning indeed." She said to Joshua, "You must be very careful."

"Ah! I see. I—I—will," muttered Josh.

"Try and tell us, 'Liz," I said, "how you would have us let it out to her, judging by your own feelings. Now, try and tell us."

She stood and thought a minute.

"I would prepare her," she said, presently, "as for some sorrow, because she would turn to God to help her to bear it: and, once in His presence, she could endure anything. When she is on her knees, and says, 'Now, Lord, Thy will be done,' then let her know His will is not harsh, but gracious towards her; then let her know the truth, and tell her that joy should be taken from Him with a seemly meekness as well as sorrow."

"But suppose," said Josh, in a low, muttering voice I should never have known as his—"suppose she loves another man by this."

"Ishan't suppose anything of the kind," said 'Lizbeth; "and don't you."

"You are changed, and why not another woman?" he said, in a loud whisper.

"Changed?" 'Lizbeth repeated after him. "How do you mean, master?"

"You said—you——" he stopped, and signed me to go on.

"What does he mean?" asked 'Lizbeth.

"He means to say you owned to caring for another since you lost your husband," I blundered out, afraid of mischief in every word I said.

She turned on Josh and drew herself up a little proudly.

"You mistake me, sir," she said to him. "I care no more for this young man than I should do if my husband had never left me. I look on him with that wonder with which we cannot help looking on those beings who have begun here the endless life which most of us never begin till we die. Ah ! master," she said, sighing, as she knelt down to put the plate of steaks on the fender, "may God above us grant that your wife, in her supposed widowhood, may have been and may still be as true to you as I have been, and still am, and always shall be, to my poor drowned one, who seems to me crying in every wave that breaks, 'Remember me !'"

"I've said those words sometimes," says Joshua, in his whisper; "I've said it to the waves that washed my prison shore ; perhaps the sea bore them to my wife."

"And perhaps," said I to 'Lizbeth, "*your* husband did not die as soon as you thought, but lived on some desert place like my mate here, and really said those very words you think you've heard."

"You know well, Hector," answered Elizabeth, as calm as I ever saw her, "I never suffered doubt or enjoyed hope on this matter." Then she turned to Josh and said,—

"It was all very sudden and certain about *my* husband's death. God knew my weakness and added no suspense to my sorrow ; He made it simple for me as we try to make a lesson for a child."

"I see—I see !" said Joshua ; and 'Lizbeth, as she stooped before the fire, turned upon him again a sharp, half-affrighted look.

"It's very strange," said she to me, "but, Hector, your friend reminds me of some one I once knew. It's foolish, and comes of living all alone with the children, I suppose ; but I am as childish as they, and I have had my Josh before my eyes this last half-hour, all through that poor youth Michael speaking of things that would have caused him pain."

She had her eyes on Joshua as she spoke. I saw them look from his hair to his broad shoulder, to his hand and the marks on it, which seemed to send her glance darting to his face. Josh, as he felt them, lifted his head slowly and looked at her.

She whitened ; she shrank away from him ; she came to me, and caught hold of my arm with both her hands. She looked at me as if she would ask what it was that ailed her.

I took her hand and tried to keep it from shaking.

"Elizabeth," I said, "do you think this mate of mine like Joshua?"

"What are you doing to me ?" she moaned out. "Hector, what are you doing to me to turn my brain like this ?"

"Don't you remember saying, *Liz*, that the Almighty's will was not always hard ?" I said to her. "Suppose, now, by any wonderful chance, such as we hear of sometimes, your Joshua was not dead ; or, not going so far as that, suppose his body had been found, or news had come to hand that you ought to hear ; say he had lived longer than you knew, and been slaughtered by the savages, or at any rate

that there was something particular you ought to hear; but you must get quiet first, or I would be afraid to tell you anything."

"Have you something *certain* to tell me—quite, quite certain?" she said, looking me through and through.

"I have, 'Lizbeth Vandereck," I said, "but not till you are quieter and stop trembling."

"You are right," said she, pressing her white lips together. "It is not seemly to take His will thus, be it what it may. You are right, force me to wait till I am still and my heart is quiet."

She put one hand to her side and, leaning on the table and chairs with the other as she went, crossed the room to where her Bible lay on the white cloth, with flowers before it, all as usual. She clasped her hands over it and closed her eyes and stood so till she had ceased trembling. Then she opened the Bible at that page where Joshua's death was written down, kissed the line, and raised her eyes,—holier and brighter I never saw,—and clasped her hands on her breast, and said in a clear voice,—

"Thy will be done."

Then, in a fainter voice,—

"Now, Hector, I am ready."

I looked at Joshua. He rose. His form seemed to grow younger than I had ever seen it; his rags took a strange grace; his face was bright as any bridegroom's.

He went to her. She turned her eyes upon him.

"My wife," said he, standing before her like a prince, so rich he felt in knowledge of her faithful love. "Your beggar has come back to you, a beggar still."

She fell back a little, resting her hand against her Bible table, and staring at him while drops came out of her forehead, and her eyes seemed ready to start from her head. Then she began to pant, and lean back as if she would drop, shrinking from him, so that he durst not approach her; and next she looked to me and moved her arms and shrieked,—

"Hector, waken me—help me! I suffer nightmare—madness! What is this? Do you see? What is it stands here in my husband's form?"

"It is him, 'Lizbeth," I said. "It is Joshua."

"Joshua!" she repeated, with a pale, wild look at me. "Oh, Hector! God is great; but could He do this? Could He bring *my* lost one from his deep tomb? Joshua!"

"My wife!"

She clasped her hands and crouched before him, staring at his face. Then she went and laid a hand on each shoulder and looked at him, and the changes that his years of hardship had made in him, with the piteous, puzzled doubt of a child who sees its mother in new garments. She touched and wondered over his darkened hair and great beard; the foreign stone he had pierced and used as a button for his coat; then again she looked into his eyes, and was satisfied, and smiled, and fell with her cheek against his and her arms round his neck; and, as

if her faithful life cared not to flow further than this glad moment, and this meeting, she swooned away.

It was all very well for 'Lizbeth, when she came to herself, to rail in a sort of merry passion at the world for the misery it causes by driving folks asunder as she and Joshua had been driven. It was all very well for *her* to say,—

"Don't those who are happy together know better than their neighbours what's enough for 'em? And, ah laws! it's few gets off as well as Josh and me when they once begin to listen to what's expected of 'em. Suppose they *do* what's expected, five times out o' six, I'll warrant by the time they're done it they've forgot in trying to please the world how to please each other and themselves. *Then* says your neighbours, 'How comfortable So-and-so is, they've got all as they should.' '*All,*' says somebody, 'why I don't believe they care a jot for each other;' or, 'I believe they're not so happy as somebody else that hasn't tried to please the world at all.'"

As I said, this was all very well for Liz to hold to, but for myself, I did not intend to go back to *my* wife a beggar.

It was different with Joshua Vandereck. *He* had it in his power to give happiness in every look and every word. I felt to need much more than looks or words to show anything of what I felt for Margaret. I felt to need to give her all the wishes of her gentle heart and clever little head, before I could expect her to know my love as Liz knew Joshua's.

And I was right in this, for I know now by her letters a change has come to her. She's no longer meek and patient in my absence, but says many little sharp things by which I know that the comforts by which I have surrounded her have spoken for me, and she *does* wish for me back.

And I *am* homeward-bound from the third prosperous voyage to our island in the very ship that Transome, 'Lizbeth's rich uncle, set us off in after Josh and I had told our story to him.

Vandereck is a rich man now—Liz goes dressed *beyond* what pleases her neighbours. My Margaret has all that her pretty simple way make her "wish for," and I—well, I am homeward bound.

I have just read this journal to my wife, and close it with a hand that shakes with joy at the sight of her dear eyes looking at me as they never did before.

She wishes me to add one thing which I had not forgotten, but which I should not have written down here if she did not wish it so much.

It is that I was fortunate enough on my second voyage to be the means of saving the life of Captain Kennedy.